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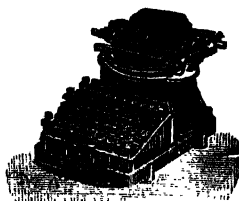
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| 3. Address of the Marquis of Salisbury to the Electors of the United Kingdom. Published in the Daily Papers, September 24, 1900, . . . . .                                                                           | 526  |



ments were forced to set aside routine and pedantry. Freed for the moment from the trammels of red tape, the natural vigour of the race came to the relief of a miserable system, and when fighting had ended and Napoleon III. had begun to incubate peace, a fine British force, fully equipped, was at length assembled in the Tauric Chersonese. There were the usual inquiries, too late to be of use, and 'we soon reverted' to our customary condition of military inefficiency.\*

The campaigns of 1866 and 1870-71 profoundly impressed the imagination of Europe and ushered in an era of army reform. Reorganisation on German principles was widely undertaken, and, partially awaking from our slumbers, we have since extensively tinkered our military system, borrowing copiously from German sources, while ignoring the essential conditions which conferred brilliant success upon the German arms. There was no attempt to formulate the military requirements of the British Empire and to frame an organisation capable of fulfilling those requirements. Germany possessed a rigid territorial system, which automatically evolved regiments, brigades, divisions, and army corps as soon as mobilisation was decreed. We attempted to follow suit, and, by dropping the numbers of our historic regiments in favour of complicated territorial and other titles, it was fondly believed that we had taken a further step in advance. Germany, perpetuating the principles devised by Scharnhorst and Stein in the days of Prussia's humiliation, upheld short service with the colours, followed by a long period of furlough, succeeded by a further period in the army reserve. We effected a compromise by instituting a period of seven or eight years with the colours,† followed by five or four years on furlough. Men thus relegated to furlough were entitled army reservists, and as these men were required on a general mobilisation to make up the peace cadres to war strength it followed that there was no army reserve. It was sought to remedy this deficiency by giving a retaining-fee to a certain number of Militiamen who volunteered to serve in the ranks of the army in the event of war. Such men were designated as the 'Militia Reserve.' It is impossible to overrate the confusion and the misapprehensions to which these misnomers have given rise. The 'Army Reserve' is not a reserve, but a body of

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\* 'The War in the Crimea,' Sir E. Hamley.

† Enlistments for three years with the colours were afterwards sanctioned in the Guards.

men liable to be called up to fill out the peace cadres to war strength. The 'Militia Reserve' is not a reserve for the Militia, which does not exist, but an indifferent army reserve which can only be called into being by depleting and disorganising the Militia.

German conditions require a powerful army always at home in peace time, with its units always quartered in their territorial districts, and capable, in whole or in part, of being placed on a war-footing at the shortest notice. British conditions demand that one half of the army should be always abroad and on a war-footing. It was therefore arranged that each infantry regiment should have two battalions,\* one of which was to be always abroad, while the other was to act as a *dépôt* at home. As equality of battalions at home and abroad has never been and could never be maintained, the system was invariably out of gear, and makeshift measures of various kinds were applied to conceal the chronic breakdown. The conditions of the British Empire further demanded the frequent despatch of expeditionary forces to distant parts of the world. The home army could only meet this demand by calling up men from its misnamed reserve, a body created only for the purposes of a great war, by promiscuously drafting men from several units to make one unit complete, or by creating temporary units out of men skimmed from the whole of the home army. These three expedients, all equally objectionable and destructive alike of regimental *esprit de corps* and of the vaunted territorial principle, have been adopted at various times.

It was inevitable that such an organisation as is above sketched should be subjected to continuous criticism, and while in other armies defects of detail have been attacked with beneficial results, our system has been unsparingly condemned in principle. The distinction is vital, and the reasoned strictures which have been heaped upon our organisation, combined with the general distrust and dislike of the War Office which permeate the British army, have unquestionably exercised an unfortunate moral influence upon all ranks. A military force which, rightly or wrongly, feels no confidence in its central administration cannot be in a sound and healthy condition.

The military renaissance which dates from 1870 led to other changes in this country. Field manœuvres, which the Prussians regarded as the keystone of their system of train-

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Four in the case of two Rifle regiments.

ing, were imported into England, and occasionally practised on a considerable scale. There was, however, no attempt to imitate the thorough and complete progressive methods which formed the basis of the German system, and our autumn manœuvres have been parodies of their prototypes. It would be unjust to assert that they have taught nothing; it is certain that the benefits which they might have conferred upon all ranks have been heavily discounted. Meanwhile, the startling success of the German arms, and the tragic collapse of the military system of France, produced intellectual effects of importance. A powerful impetus was imparted to military study among civilians and soldiers alike. Thought was everywhere directed into this comparatively unaccustomed channel, and the result was shown by an immense increase in the literary output. Writers on military subjects became numerous, and publishers quickly discovered that the general public was interested in military matters. The intellectual revival in the army itself was marked, and an earnest desire to learn was manifested which, if wisely directed, would have worked wonders. Unfortunately, the practical aspects of military training were ignored, and a system of theoretical examinations, borrowed from the wisdom of China, was introduced, which set a premium upon military pedantry. Elaborate analyses of the details of the Franco-German war usurped the place of field training, and a large class of officers arose which could critically discourse upon the operations round Metz, but could not place outposts in the field. Education in this country, long neglected or left to chance, still remains unpractical, unscientific, ill-organised, and inadequate to the requirements of a people involved in keen commercial rivalry with other nations. The palpable defects in our military education which the South African war has brought to light are but manifestations of national weakness in a single and a limited aspect.

Other influences have been at work to undermine the efficiency of the army as a fighting machine. Prior to the Crimean War the distribution of rewards and decorations was niggardly in the extreme. The heroes of the Peninsula for the most part received nothing. In 1854-55, however, a new system was inaugurated. A heavy shower of honours and promotions descended upon the officers who had served in the Crimea, and the distribution was in the main ill-directed. Staff-officers who had shown exceedingly little capacity, and who had in some cases spent only a few

months at the seat of war, were extravagantly rewarded, while men who had served continuously with their regiments through the miseries of the winter siege were ignored. It soon became an article of faith in the British army that regimental duty was a thing to be avoided as much as possible, and that honours were the prerogative of the staff. Subsequent experience tended to crystallise this impression. Onwards from the days of the Crimea there has been an almost continuous series of small wars. One expeditionary force after another has been improvised, and, as no military body ready for war existed in this country, it was necessary to appoint staffs *ad hoc*. The numerous posts were eagerly sought after, and the fortunate officers selected were withdrawn from duties of the most varied natures. Once thus employed, decorated, and promoted, an individual would naturally have strong claims to be selected on another occasion, so that a starring system was inaugurated, akin to that which renders good opera almost impossible in this country, and officers whose names had been made familiar to the public by the press found themselves in an exceptionally favoured position. Our numerous small wars have taught some useful lessons; but as our opponents were for the most part ill-armed and ignorant of all military science, generalship was not severely tested, and liberties could be taken which in less favourable circumstances would have entailed disaster. Among the results of these wars the following must be reckoned:—All sense of scale in military operations was lost, and relative importance depended principally upon the amount of space which, having regard to other current affairs, the press was disposed to accord. Personal gallantry, the display of which is largely a matter of chance, was extolled at the expense of military capacity. High rank was attainable by officers who had never commanded a battalion or proved that they could handle a brigade. The military administrators of the War Office remained for many years passing from one post to another, growing more and more out of touch with the army, and forming, with their adherents, a charmed circle from which outside ability was excluded. Manœuvres rigorously carried out on German principles would have supplied a corrective to some of these evils; but trained directors were wanting, and gross mistakes were treated as amusing incidents which had no influence on the professional advancement of their perpetrators. Tactics were of minor importance in small wars, and inspecting generals who could gauge the tactical

proficiency of units did not exist. It was far simpler and quicker to test parade efficiency. The Algerian experiences of the French army prior to 1870 must have produced many of the results from which we have suffered. In a striking passage General Lewal has contrasted the slow promotion, the unnoticed and unrewarded years of toil which Von Moltke patiently endured, with the high rank and reputation cheaply won by French officers during the same period :—

‘ While this major laboured in Berlin without great recompense, high-sounding reputations, prodigious promotions were being won in Algeria. Men of the same age were attaining the highest rank, and, later, fate was to bring these brilliant generals face to face with this persevering old Prussian major in an immense convulsion, in which the French army was to succumb.’

It is of the essence of the German military system that it could bring such a man as Von Moltke to the forefront as an organiser and as a director of war. If we have a Von Moltke, it is certain that he will live and die in obscurity. Our system has no place for him ; he could not fulfil any of the conditions necessary to bring his genius before the army and the public. The successful leader of some petty expedition against savages would soar over his head. A military administration cannot, however, be justly charged with full blame for the defects, moral and material, of the organism which it controls. An army is largely the reflex of a nation. A State which is in a sound and healthy condition, and a people animated by the true and earnest patriotism which lies deeper than words, will generally succeed in creating and maintaining an effective army. It was a national regeneration, not a military movement, which uplifted Prussia after the crushing disaster of 1806. And in seeking the causes which have led to many mishaps and some humiliation in South Africa, it is necessary to search outside and beyond the War Office.

Probably no war in which Great Britain has engaged began more inauspiciously than that now drawing to a close. We maintain a large and expensive establishment for the conduct of foreign affairs. By the accident of circumstance, the negotiations upon which peace or war depended devolved upon another department of State untrained in diplomacy. The result was naturally unsatisfactory. While some powerful interests may have inclined towards war, the Government undoubtedly wished for peace, and it was therefore unfortunate that in the eyes of foreign observers the

tenour of the negotiations was capable of an opposite interpretation. Trained diplomacy would have carefully avoided the risks of a misconstruction of motives. In such cases, even the turn of a phrase may be important. As the possibility of a war, which has since been pronounced 'inevitable,' must apparently have been taken into account, it may be assumed that early in the spring of last year the War Office was asked to give some idea of the extent of the preparations which would be required. National policy and military considerations cannot be safely divorced, and all War Offices except our own have a special department charged with the duty of studying military contingencies and of tendering reasoned advice. The establishment of such a department had been forcibly urged by a Royal Commission nine years previously without any result. The Intelligence Branch had, however, prepared a singularly accurate statement of the armed strength of the Dutch Republics, including detailed particulars of the guns and ammunition purchased from abroad. The information in regard to the *personnel* and *matériel* of the possible enemy was, therefore, quite exceptionally exact. There remained, as uncertain factors, the attitude of the Free State, the extent of the defection of Cape Colonists, and the measure of fighting power which the Boers were likely to develop. Of these, the last only was a military question, and the experience of the war of 1880-81, together with the known character of the Dutch people as stubborn fighters, which is deeply graven on history, provided sources of enlightenment, while the Austrian campaign in Bosnia and Herzegovina supplied a grave warning. There were, however, false prophets who asserted, first that sufficiently strong language would bend the Dutch Republics to our will, and secondly that the military power of the Boers was a bubble easily pricked. The military authorities originally considered that a force of 35,000 men would meet the requirements, and the Cabinet, so informed, shaped its policy accordingly. History nowhere records so colossal an error.

The army at home was organised on the theory that it should be able, 'as a second phase of a struggle with a 'first-class Power, to send two army corps abroad.'\* The army corps is a product of the German territorial system which has never existed nor can exist in this country. In the English language, it means only a printed list of units,



horses, vehicles, and details which have to be collected from all parts of the United Kingdom when required, and supplied with a hastily improvised staff. Successive Cabinets and Parliaments must be assumed to have acquiesced in this theory, and no special fault can, therefore, be found with the War Office for not having provided for such a contingency as a war with the Dutch Republics which has entailed the employment of the numerical equivalent of more than six army corps. An expeditionary force consisting of a so-called army corps, a cavalry division, and seven infantry battalions for the line of communications, in all about 47,000 men, having been at length decided upon, and some weeks being available before mobilisation was decreed, there was ample time to make necessary preparations.

Meanwhile, there was a grave deficiency of ammunition. As Lord Rosebery's Government had been defeated on a motion with regard to the reserves of this essential requisite of war, and as the statement of military experts, which the then Secretary of State for War adduced, failed to satisfy the House of Commons, it was universally believed that the Cabinet which assumed office had made good all possible shortcomings. This belief proved ill-founded. When war was declared, ammunition both for artillery and small arms was dangerously deficient. Now that, after great efforts, this deficiency has been remedied, it may be stated that if in October last we had been involved in a war with a European Power, and if the navy as well as the army had required ammunition, national disaster would have been inevitable.

From the Boer point of view, it was most desirable to postpone hostilities till rain had fallen; but as early as July the Government of Natal became uneasy, and in the first days of September the Governor forcibly pointed out the defencelessness of the colony. The regular troops in South Africa at this time numbered about 9,500 men, with eighteen field and six mountain guns, a force obviously inadequate to the mere passive defence of Her Majesty's dominions. The organisation of the British army was such that not a single unit at home was ready to take the field. To mobilise might prejudice the negotiations in progress; but it was evidently necessary to take some action, and on September 8 reinforcements amounting to about 9,000 fighting men, with six field batteries, were ordered to South Africa. There were 106,000 nominal effectives in the regular army at home; but only one weak battalion,

another which chanced to be at Aldershot *en route* from Crete to the West Indies, and three field batteries made up to war strength by a wholesale drafting of men and horses could be provided. By drawing a brigade, three field batteries, and three cavalry regiments from India, and two battalions from colonial garrisons, the meagre reinforcement was made up. If 30,000 men could have been sent out at this period the whole course of the war would have been different, and no more striking object lesson of the unsuitability of our organisation to Imperial requirements can be imagined.

Throughout September, Natal was at the mercy of the Boers, whose preparations were happily incomplete. On October 3 the first Indian transport reached Durban, and others rapidly followed. On the 11th the period fixed by President Kruger's ultimatum expired, and a state of war supervened. Meanwhile, the mobilisation of the expeditionary force was ordered on the 7th; but the earliest departures did not take place till the 20th, and the distance from Southampton to Cape Town is nearly 6,000 miles.

A more dangerous situation than that which arose on October 11 is hardly to be found in the annals of war. It was open to the Boers to occupy our troops fully in Northern Natal and to sweep down into Cape Colony. A general rising of their colonial sympathisers would certainly have occurred, and we should have been driven to defend Cape Town at all cost. At the best, we should have had to reconquer South Africa from the sea northwards. At the worst, we should have lost Cape Colony. Natal, however, offered the shortest route to the coast, and reminiscences of 1880-81 may have inclined the Boers in this direction. Upon Natal the storm of invasion burst. In England the entire situation had been hopelessly misunderstood, and the local military view has not yet transpired. The general officer commanding in South Africa, who was not in political sympathy with the High Commissioner, was recalled at the moment when his presence was most needed, and became at once the object of violent attacks, although debarred by his position from all means of self-defence. Whether any definite idea existed as to how the possessions of the Crown were to be protected against invasion is at present unknown, and the responsibility for such measures as were taken is undetermined. In Natal, military stores were accumulated at Ladysmith, which had been utilised as a camp without the smallest consideration of its defensive capabilities.

Kimberley was to be held as the centre of the great diamond industry, and Mafeking either on account of its association with the raid of 1896, or with a vague notion of maintaining communication with Rhodesia. A detachment of British troops was sent to the former, and capable officers were placed in charge of both. Both positions were partially provisioned, and at Mafeking local foresight happily added to the supplies. That a long line of railway is peculiarly vulnerable, and that both Kimberley and Mafeking were certain to be isolated for months, was apparently not realised by the authorities. In Natal, political sentiment was naturally opposed to abandoning territory, and it was urged that Newcastle, thirty miles from Volksrust, where the Boers were concentrated, should be held. This was, however, too obviously preposterous, and Major-General Sir W. Symons, who had arrived from India, took post at Dundee, thirty-five miles further south. The Quartermaster-General of the British army, removed from his post just when its duties were becoming vitally important, arrived in Natal a few days before the outbreak of war to take command, and was persuaded by the Governor, against his better judgement, to acquiesce in the occupation of Dundee.

The military situation on October 11 was thus absolutely false. About 4,000 men were occupying an impossible position at Dundee, and the railway thither from the frontier had been left intact for the use of the invaders. Another force of about 6,000 men was at Ladysmith, a place totally unfitted for defence, and no effective measures for artificially strengthening either had been taken. There was a small reserve at Pietermaritzburg, and Durban could be guarded by the Navy. Kimberley, Vryburg, and Mafeking were completely *en l'air*; the whole frontier of Cape Colony was open to any form of attack, and no reinforcements could be expected at the front for five weeks. At the northern apex of Natal about 16,000 Boers were ready to advance, and at least 6,000 more were preparing to move on Ladysmith from Van Reenen's Pass. In England it was generally believed that a repulse with moderate loss would suffice to break up the enemy's forces.

During the night of October 19 the Boers, with artillery, occupied Talana Hill, north of Dundee, and opened fire at daybreak on the British camp. Their guns were quickly silenced, and the first position ever defended by magazine rifles was gallantly stormed by the British infantry. Most unfortunately, Sir W. Symons fell mortally wounded, and

the action subsequently lacked direction. A combined attack in three columns had been intended by the enemy, which happily failed; but a squadron of Hussars, with some mounted infantry, fell into the hands of one of the belated Boer columns in circumstances which have not been explained. A long series of 'regrettable incidents' which have caused dismay and perplexity throughout the country was thus early inaugurated. The British force, originally placed in a false position, now found itself hopelessly compromised, and was withdrawn on the 22nd, abandoning its wounded and baggage, and joining hands with the Ladysmith force on the 26th, after a hazardous march which a more enterprising enemy would have turned into disaster. Meanwhile, on the 21st, Sir G. White attacked and routed the Boers in a strong position at Elandslaagte, and on the 24th fought an action at Rietfontein, having moved out to cover the force retreating from Dundee. On the 30th a general movement from Ladysmith was made, leading to severe fighting with unfortunate results. On the right the infantry, of which only a part was actually engaged, was repulsed, and the retreat might have been compromised but for the great efforts of the artillery. On the left, part of two battalions and a mountain battery, which found themselves isolated at Nicholson's Nek, surrendered, owing to some unexplained misunderstanding. Most fortunately, on this day a naval contingent with 4·7-inch and 12-pounder guns arrived by train from Durban, and the moral gain arising from this accession of armament proved valuable out of all proportion to the material effect. The ready aid of the navy, frequently forthcoming in times of military difficulty and danger, has never been so opportune as on this occasion. No further offensive operations on a large scale were attempted, and by November 2 a British field force of more than 10,000 men, including nearly 2,000 mounted troops, with thirty-six field and five naval guns, was definitely invested in a thoroughly disadvantageous position. 'The 'unhappy entanglement of Ladysmith,' which was to exercise a most baneful effect on the whole course of the campaign, had begun.

In the west, Vryburg was occupied by the enemy; Kimberley and Mafeking had been isolated since October 15, and the first of several unfortunate armoured-train affairs had occurred near the latter. In the centre the Boers were preparing to cross the Orange River into Cape Colony. 'In war,' said Napoleon, 'our aim must be to

‘secure a good position,’ and in all wars the opening moves have proved supremely important. If the organisation of the British army had permitted the despatch of 30,000 men early in September, if military and not political considerations had ruled the dispositions in Natal, and if Mafeking had been abandoned as a point of no strategic or other importance, infinite future difficulty would have been avoided. The opening moves left us in a position strategically as well as morally bad. To have shut up our only field force within three weeks of the outbreak of war was a considerable triumph to the Boer arms, and henceforth for a long period the initiative was lost to us, and we became preoccupied with the attempt to restore a situation already compromised. Until the middle of May the British commanders were hampered by fears for the safety of besieged garrisons. ‘It is almost ‘impossible,’ wrote Von Moltke, ‘to remedy during a campaign an error in the primary concentration of the troops,’ adding that ‘no plan of operations can with any certainty ‘reach beyond the first encounter with the enemy.’ The initial errors in the South African campaign could never be wholly remedied; beyond a general idea that the invasion of Natal and Cape Colony must be averted, there was no reasoned plan of operations.

As soon as war was evidently imminent, the great self-governing colonies at once offered assistance, and, on the eve of a campaign for the special needs of which mounted troops were clearly all-important, the War Office telegraphed to the colonial governors, ‘Unmounted men preferred.’ Nothing could more conclusively prove how absolutely the military conditions were misconceived; no mounted troops were better fitted for the semi-irregular warfare which alone could occur in South Africa than those which the great colonies were able to provide. This amazing blunder was afterwards recognised, and it may be hoped that the vital necessity of maintaining a military department charged with the duty of studying the requirements of ‘inevitable’ wars will at length be admitted.

On October 31 General Sir Redvers Buller reached Cape Town, and on November 9 the ‘Roslin Castle,’ first of the transports conveying the expeditionary force, arrived there. The new Commander-in-Chief brought with him a plan of campaign discussed with H.M. Government. A defensive attitude was to be observed in Natal, and the bulk of the troops were to invade the Orange Free State and strike at Bloemfontein. Meanwhile, however, the situation had

assumed an aspect which seems not to have been expected. Ladysmith and Kimberley, 300 miles apart, were believed to be in imminent danger. To proceed to their relief may have seemed a natural course, although it violated the first principles of strategy, which demand concentration of effort upon a primary objective. An advance on Bloemfontein, as was later to be proved, would have quickly drawn to the Orange Free State the bulk of the enemy's force, and would have transferred the principal scene of action to country better suited to the operations of the British army than Northern Natal. On November 1 eight cavalry regiments, twenty batteries, and thirty-five infantry battalions,\* exclusive of colonial forces, were at sea or under orders for embarkation. Upon the direction given to this large force the future course of events evidently depended. This was the first turning-point of the campaign.

Whether any local influence was brought to bear on the Commander-in-Chief is not known; but, without explanation of the reason of his change of plan, he suddenly left Cape Town for Durban, where he arrived on November 25. The following were approximately the dispositions made at this period:—A force of two cavalry regiments, five batteries, and twelve and a half battalions, with a naval brigade and a colonial contingent, was assigned to the De Aar-Kimberley line. About three and a half cavalry regiments, some mounted infantry, four batteries, and two and a half infantry battalions were allotted for the capture of Colesberg; and one squadron, with a colonial mounted force, three batteries, and four and a half infantry battalions for the line East London-Stormberg. The bulk of the remainder, including sixteen regular infantry battalions and eight batteries, was sent round to Durban. Broadly speaking, therefore, one-half of the expeditionary force was diverted to Natal, and the rest was split up into three bodies, each with a separate objective. The evils thus arising were manifest.† The British army was spread over a front of 450 miles in scattered detachments, nowhere strong enough for any effective purpose. The elaborate army corps and cavalry division organisation was utterly destroyed—divisions, brigades, and even cavalry regiments being ruthlessly broken

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\* To make up the losses in Natal, one battery and three infantry battalions were, on October 31, added to the expeditionary force.

† As these evils were pointed out at the time, there is, in this case, no question of the wisdom which follows events.

up. The resulting confusion of transport and stores was appalling. Lastly, the Commander-in-Chief being committed to a campaign on his own account in distant Natal, there was no one to maintain any control over the operations as a whole or to co-ordinate the movements of subordinate commanders. In a short time, as was inevitable, military chaos reigned in Cape Colony, and friction between the colonial and Imperial forces added to the difficulties. The second phase of the war, which was commenced under even worse auspices than the first, culminated in a week of disaster.

The orders left behind by the Commander-in-Chief have not been published. Nor do we know what reports had been received from Colonel Kekewich, the able commandant at Kimberley. It must be assumed that the situation was regarded as urgent, since Lord Methuen began his advance from Orange River on November 21 without waiting for the concentration of his whole force. At Belmont on the 23rd, and at Enslin on the 27th, the Boers were attacked and dislodged from strong positions. Extreme hurry was the main characteristic of these two actions. No attempt was made to utilise the great numerical superiority of the British troops to envelope the enemy, and, the small mounted force being unable to pursue, the successes were fruitless. Advancing again on the 28th, Lord Methuen stumbled up against a strongly entrenched position on both banks of the Modder River, and a severe action followed. The Boers, who were completely concealed, were heavily shelled by the British artillery, and in the afternoon a party of infantry succeeded in crossing the river and turning their right. During the night the trenches were evacuated by the Boers, who took up a fresh position at Magersfontein, astride of the road and railway to Kimberley. Since the action at Tel-el-Kebir—which, in spite of exceptionally favourable conditions, would have miscarried but for a fortunate chance—night attacks had found influential advocates in the British army. On the night of December 10, after a slight and ineffective artillery preparation, the Highland Brigade was ordered to storm the enemy's position, which was most imperfectly understood. Caught in close formation at short range, the attacking force was shattered with heavy loss. The advance along this line was now completely checked, and the total losses during the operations were nearly 3,000. Henceforth, for two months, inaction, mitigated only by desultory artillery fire, supervened. Meanwhile the Boers

at Magersfontein dwindled in numbers, but sedulously entrenched their position, which owed little to artificial aid when attacked in December.

In the neighbourhood of Colesberg, Lieut.-General French began a series of operations towards the end of November, and succeeded in persistently harassing the Boers and compelling them to bring reinforcements across the Orange River. Here also a night attack made by the Suffolk regiment led to disaster. On the Stormberg line, Lieut.-General Gatacre was induced to make a premature night attack upon a position which had not been reconnoitred. The troops were wearied with a railway journey in the hot sun and a subsequent long march in the darkness. The proper road was lost, and at daybreak on December 10 the troops were exposed in close order to a heavy fire. Retreat was inevitable, and the loss exceeded 700, including more than 600 prisoners. Only the tactical ineptitude of the Boers saved the whole force from capture or annihilation. Reinforcements were sent to General Gatacre, but for three months nothing of importance was accomplished, and the position here, as on the western border, was practically one of stalemate.

In Natal, after the isolation of Ladysmith, raiding parties of the enemy moved southwards, looting extensively, and successfully imposing upon the imagination of the British commanders. By December 14 Sir Redvers Buller had concentrated more than 20,000 men, with five field batteries and some naval guns, at Chieveley, seven miles south of the Tugela, and on this day the enemy's position on the north bank was heavily shelled. The Boer trenches were well concealed; there was no return fire, and the effect of the bombardment, moral as well as material, was necessarily trivial. On the following day an attempt was made to force the passage of the river. The ground had not been studied, and Hlangwane Hill, on the right flank, which commanded a great part of the enemy's position, had not been taken.\* On the left, a brigade, marched in close formation under a crushing fire with a view to cross a ford which could not be found, was repulsed with heavy loss. Two field batteries advanced without escort to a position, where they were put out of action by the loss of men and

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\* The omission to occupy this hill is so inexplicable as almost to give probability to the camp rumour that the staff was unaware that it was on the south side of the river.



horses. Two guns were withdrawn after heroic efforts; the rest were captured. On the right, a small colonial mounted force attempted to capture the Ilangwane Hill, which ought to have been occupied before any general action was fought, but being unsupported was forced to retire. At the battle of Colenso it was only the admirable behaviour of the troops in trying circumstances that redeemed a painful failure.

The plan of an offensive campaign on four widely separated lines had thus led to three serious reverses within six days, and had involved a total loss of nearly 5,000 men. The prevailing apathy of the country was for the moment rudely disturbed, and keen resentment at the unnecessary humiliation of our arms in South Africa was widely manifested. Even misgivings as to the ultimate issue of the war found expression. The successful defence of the Boers appeared in the light of a revelation. There was, however, nothing to cause any surprise. Defective tactics, following close upon faulty strategy, which, in part at least, was due to lack of preparation for war, sufficed to account for all that had occurred. The Boers, with the aid of an excellent rifle, had shown tenacity in defence. Precisely similar conditions had obtained in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-8, and the lessons painfully learned by the Russian general staff at a wholesale cost of life had now to be assimilated by our military leaders. Having free railway communication between Pretoria and Ladysmith, the Boers had brought up some comparatively heavy guns, of which the moral effect greatly exceeded the material results. It was a matter of common knowledge that the enemy to be encountered in this 'inevitable war' would be mounted, and so far the only tactical advantage derived from their mobility was the power of securing a scathless retreat. Mounted troops were, however, almost everywhere deficient on our side, and such victories as Belmont and Enslin were fruitless.\* 'The man in the street' readily came to the conclusion that a new departure of some kind was necessary. To the Cabinet Committee of Defence, which has been sometimes regarded as a phantom body, is due the credit for the prompt decision to send Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener to South Africa.

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\* The action at Elandsplaagte, which was directed by Lieut.-General French, provides almost the only instance of effective cavalry action following a successful infantry attack; but failing light interfered with the pursuit.

On January 10 the new Commander-in-Chief reached Cape Town to take up the tangled threads of a misdirected campaign. Meanwhile, the mobilisation of a fifth division had been ordered on November 11, after the isolation of Ladysmith; of a sixth division on December 4, after the action at Modder River; and of a seventh division on December 15. Further measures followed. On December 19 regulations for the enrolment of Volunteers and Yeomanry were issued. An additional cavalry brigade, together with two regular and thirty militia battalions with various details, were ordered out, and an eighth division was mobilised on January 22. More troops were also offered by the great colonies, and were gladly accepted. The process of reinforcement went on, and by May 31 204,000 men had been landed in South Africa, including more than 8,000 colonial troops. In 1878, the Austrians, who had at first totally underrated the difficulties of an occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, discovered that more than 200,000 men, with 480 guns, were required. To subjugate a country at least as difficult, and held by a people far more warlike, possessing a higher military organisation, and infinitely better armed, the War Office had originally believed that 35,000 men would suffice.

When Lord Roberts took up the burden of his difficult and anxious task, one thing was evident. There was already a large force in South Africa, and more troops were rapidly arriving; but there was no field army. In theory, the army corps and the cavalry division which formed the expeditionary force claimed this designation. In fact, partly on account of the special conditions of South Africa, partly because of the break-up of units, and partly by reason of the administrative chaos which prevailed, no mobile force existed. Hitherto the troops had been tethered to lines of railway, and so long as this restriction remained no decisive results could be hoped for, however great the number of troops employed. Mobility is the first essential of offensive war.

For a whole month the work of organisation quietly proceeded. Transport was prepared and troops were concentrated. At the end of this time there was at length a field army of about 40,000 men. It was certain that Bloemfontein would be the objective; but the line of operations was not equally obvious. By striking direct across the Vaal by way of Norval's Pont or Bethulie, Lord Roberts would clear the enemy out of Cape Colony during his advance, and would undoubtedly relieve the pressure upon Kimberley and Lady-

smith. On the other hand, the Boers would retire before him, destroying the railway, and they would have time to concentrate in front of the invading force. Yielding betimes to adequate pressure, as was their proved policy, they would then have withdrawn northwards with little loss. Lord Roberts decided upon a bolder stroke which, if successful, must lead to far greater results.

At Magersfontein and investing Kimberley were some 5,000 to 6,000 Boers, drawing their supplies mainly from Bloemfontein *via* Jacobsdal. If a field army were placed astride of this line of communications, the Boers must fight in conditions dictated to them, or must retreat in circumstances which would threaten disaster. To secure success secrecy was essential; the enemy must be deceived and surprised. This was most skilfully accomplished. The British field force was concentrated between the Orange and Modder Rivers. A feint by the Highland Brigade to Koodoesrand caused General Cronje at Magersfontein to think that his right flank was to be turned, and by February 11 all was ready.

Meanwhile, at Ladysmith the situation was steadily growing worse. A successful sortie by a body of colonial troops under Lieut.-General Hunter had been made on the night of December 8, by which two of the enemy's guns were disabled; but some badly managed cavalry affairs had proved wholly abortive, and the retention of a considerable mounted force with the garrison was never justified by any effective action. On January 6, the Boers delivered an assault at dawn and surprised Wagon Hill, a vital point in the defensive cordon. The most desperate action of the whole war occurred, and the Boers showed unwonted fighting power. The older burghers,\* however, were not well supported, or Ladysmith would probably have fallen, and a heavy thunderstorm, like the fog at Inkerman, aided the defence. A most gallant charge by three companies of the Devonshire regiment ended the struggle. A futile demonstration towards Colenso was the only form of support afforded by the relieving force, which had remained inactive since its disastrous repulse of December 7. The full penalty for 'the unhappy entanglement of Ladysmith' had yet to be paid.

On the day before Lord Roberts arrived at Cape Town a movement began from the camp at Frere, twelve miles south

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Mainly, if not entirely, Free-Statens.

of Colenso. It was now contemplated to turn the Boer positions north of the Tugela and to reach Ladysmith by a long détour to the westward. On January 10, Potgieter's Drift was seized, but the difficulties of movement proved so great that the leading infantry brigade did not begin to cross the Tugela till the 16th. Surprise was thus out of the question, and, after feeling its way forward in the intricate mountain country, the wide turning movement was abandoned on the 19th for an attack on a range of hills of which Spion Kop formed the most marked feature. After several days of inconclusive fighting, Spion Kop, which seems to have been ultimately fixed upon as the key of the position, was carried on the night of January 23. Like other imagined keys of positions, this proved delusive, and as no adequate attempts were made to support the British force on the cramped summit by action elsewhere, the efforts of the Boers could be concentrated upon it, and after heroic efforts throughout the 24th withdrawal was judged to be necessary. The despatches subsequently published constitute a painful revelation of military ineptitude; but the whole story has yet to be told. The British force immediately recrossed the Tugela, and the second attempt to relieve Ladysmith had failed as completely as the first. On February 5 the Tugela was again passed. Vaal Krantz, which quickly proved untenable, was occupied, and two days later the whole British force was again on the south bank of the river, having effected nothing. The natural difficulties of the country and the advantages it offered to the defence were so great that the prospects of reaching Ladysmith by the routes attempted were remote, but success could hardly have been gained by the methods adopted. This was a case in which all the conditions demanded that the attack should be pressed home with the utmost vigour and at any necessary sacrifice. The operations throughout appeared half-hearted, and a fruitless loss of about 2,100 men was incurred. Again a great wave of depression swept over the British people.

On February 11, however, the important strategic movement of Lord Roberts began to take effect. A large mounted force under General French swept round to the east of the Magersfontein position, reaching the Modder River on the 13th, and, starting again on the 15th, entered Kimberley in the evening. It could not be known at the time \* that General Cronje

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\* Information as to the water-supply in the Free State was somewhat defective.

would retreat along the Modder, and the urgency of the situation at Kimberley was probably overrated. General French was consequently ordered to reach the beleaguered garrison at all cost, while three infantry divisions pressed on behind him to gain positions cutting off the Boer retreat on Bloemfontein. Early on the 16th, however, General Cronje, after undue delay, started for Bloemfontein along the line of the Modder and just escaped the leading British (6th) division, which followed in hot pursuit. Recalled from Kimberley, General French, with his force greatly diminished by loss of horses, hastened back to head off the Boers. The long column of slow-moving wagons, which General Cronje declined to abandon, impeded his retreat, and on the 17th he was brought to a halt and began to entrench near Paardeberg, doubtless hoping to be relieved by forces from the east. Here he was enveloped, and an unsuccessful and indifferently planned attack, which has been much criticised, was delivered on the 18th, entailing about 1,100 casualties. The reasons for this attack have not been explained, and Lord Roberts, who arrived on the following day, at once decided to risk no further attempts of this nature, but to employ artillery, and meanwhile to deal with the Boer reinforcements arriving by instalments from the east. A heavy bombardment followed, and early on the 27th Cronje, with about 4,100 men and six guns, surrendered unconditionally.

Strategically the success was complete, and the endurance and marching-power of the troops were beyond praise. Owing to some unfortunate mistake, however, a valuable convoy was captured on the 15th by a small body of the enemy near the Riet river, and much privation was thus entailed, while the forced marches practically wrecked the mounted corps, and in the action of March 7 at Poplar Grove a great cavalry opportunity was consequently lost. On the 10th, the Boers attempted another stand at Driefontein, retreating before their position could be turned, and on the 13th Bloemfontein was occupied.

The effect of the strategic movement against General Cronje's communications, and of the subsequent advance on the Free State capital, was immediate and far-reaching. Kimberley was automatically relieved; commandos were hastily withdrawn from Natal, and the Boers south of the Orange River trekked north, evacuating Cape Colony. By the middle of March, British forces had crossed the river at Norval's Pont, Bethulie, and Aliwal; while Lord Roberts,

despatching a force southwards from Bloemfontein, seized the Free State railway and joined hands with Generals Clements and Gatacre. Most important of all, Ladysmith was relieved by Sir R. Buller at the conclusion of a series of operations which began three days after those of Lord Roberts. Hlangwane Hill, which might easily have been taken on December 15, was occupied on February 19, entailing the abandonment of Colenso by the Boers, who fell back to a position on the north bank of the Tugela. Front attacks having failed, the British troops were withdrawn across the Tugela for the third time, recrossing on the 26th to attack the enemy's left flank. Pieter's Hill was carried on the following day after hard fighting, and the way to Ladysmith lay open. The garrison had lost nearly 1,500 men,\* and privation had told heavily upon all ranks. As a fighting body it had almost ceased to exist, and the end was near at hand; Lord Roberts began his movement most opportunely. The defence of Ladysmith will remain as a memorable example of cheerful endurance and fine discipline in most trying conditions. On the other hand, the spirit shown by the relieving force, four times repulsed, ready again and again to attack a stubborn enemy holding strong positions in a most difficult country, never discouraged by failure or bad handling, and fighting to the last with courage undaunted, is worthy of the finest traditions of the army. Only troops of first-class quality would have retained their *moral* after such a series of reverses, and throughout the war the British and colonial soldier has never shone in a brighter light.

It has been regarded as an axiom of war that a retreating enemy should, if possible, be ruthlessly pursued. This was forgotten, although the considerable mounted force with the relieving army had not been overworked. North of Ladysmith the Boers were quietly entraining. On the left flank of the advancing troops they were withdrawing towards Van Reenen's Pass with deliberation. Nothing was attempted by the victorious army, and it was left to the garrison, whose remaining horses were almost incapacitated, to make an unavailing attempt to disturb the northward retreat.

The relief of Ladysmith removed the burden of a terrible anxiety from the British people in all lands. Not since the dark days of 1857, when the fate of India seemed to hang

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\* The deaths from disease exceeded 600, and at one time more than 2,300 men were in the hospital camp.

upon the capture of Delhi, had the sense of impending national disaster been so painfully oppressive. After five months of war, entailing many sacrifices of life and of reputations and vast expenditure, the lack of preparation, the gross misconceptions, and the initial strategic errors were, in part at least, retrieved. The great turning-point in the campaign was at length reached; the offensive replaced a humiliating defensive, and henceforth the initiative remained in the hands of Lord Roberts. While the foreign press, during the black weeks of December and January, had been almost unanimous in prophesying the complete discomfiture of our arms, and while, even in England, doubts as to the ultimate success of the war found expression, it is interesting to note that the situation was correctly gauged in Japan. Commenting upon the series of reverses which culminated at Colenso, the *Nichi Nichi Sambun* wrote as follows:—

‘Two months have now passed since the garrisons of Mafeking and Kimberley found themselves cut off from succour and environed by large forces. Yet the fierce Boers have not succeeded in reducing them. The spectacle is worth considering. Even assuming that England’s military organisation is inferior, it is plain that she has the faculty of developing strength and determination the longer and harder the task before her. Provided, therefore, that public opinion does not change, and provided that the present Cabinet retains the confidence of Parliament, Great Britain’s final victory is beyond doubt.’

Here was true insight at a time when prejudice caused even the serious military journals of Europe to commit themselves to criticisms in which the principles of the art of war were set at defiance.

The Boers had so far shown little aptitude for the conduct of a campaign, but much tenacity of purpose. They had thrown away their great opportunity, and staked heavily on the capture of Ladysmith and Kimberley. Utilising the railway from Pretoria, they had brought heavy guns to the front, moved them with much skill, and handled them most indifferently. At Ladysmith their artillery fire came to be regarded almost with contempt, and the 20,000 shells expended upon the town and camps produced trivial effects. Elsewhere the moral value of the Boer guns was out of all reasonable proportion to their destructive power. Being of recent pattern, however, they could outrange the British artillery firing shrapnel, which is not effective beyond about 4,000 yards, and a consciousness of inferiority was thus engendered among the other arms, which was, unfortunately, encouraged by a portion of the press. Some of our great

military authorities had lightly regarded artillery fire. In other quarters more had been claimed for it than could be accomplished on such battlefields as those selected by the Boers. The handling of guns was an art little understood by most of the commanders in the field, and our artillery officers frequently found themselves without any orders or even any clear knowledge of the intentions of the general.

The campaign thus far had not given rise to any great surprises except to those who had regarded the military strength of the Boers as a bubble easily pricked. Plevna had clearly shown the resisting power of entrenchments defended by good breechloaders, and the Russo-Turkish war as a whole had as clearly proved the hopelessness of a military policy based upon the defence of positions. So long as the British forces were immobile or tied to a railway, this policy might serve the purpose of the Boers; as soon as Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener had created a field army capable of marching 100 miles across country, the defences of Magersfontein, much elaborated after the attack of December 11, became useless. The effects of smokeless powder upon tactics had been anticipated in exhaustive discussions too little studied by our generals. The mobility of the Boers was to be turned to full account later; its value up to the middle of March had been chiefly shown in facilitating their retreat, which our overweighted, generally inadequate, and previously exhausted mounted troops were unable to arrest. In two respects, however, the enemy developed unexpected activity. Their trench-work was frequently excellent and well adapted to their needs. Their enterprise in bringing comparatively heavy guns into the field, and in mounting them in difficult positions, was remarkable. The War Office has been severely blamed for not anticipating this procedure by sending out an equally powerful artillery in the earliest transports. If this was an error, it was included in others widely prevalent. No one, even among the experts of the press, imagined that a force of 11,000 troops, well provided with cavalry, would find itself shut up in Ladysmith within three weeks of the outbreak of war. Here, certainly, a few heavy guns in the hands of skilled artillerymen would have kept down the enemy's fire; but that fire was never really effective, and the investment of Ladysmith was maintained mainly by the rifle. Steps were promptly taken to remedy the deficiency and to supplement the powerful guns which the resourceful-



ness of the navy had provided. Five-inch, 4·7 inch, and heavy 12-pounder guns have since been laboriously dragged about with our columns. It may fairly be questioned whether, on the whole, they have sufficiently justified the trouble, expense, and slow movement entailed, or whether the field armies of the future will be thus hampered. In the attack and defence of strongly entrenched positions heavy artillery is always useful; but there is no reason to expect that warfare is about to relapse into the state of which Lord Orrery in 1677 wrote as follows:—

‘ Battels do not now decide national quarrels and expose countries to the pillage of the conquerors as formerly. For we make war more like foxes than Lyons and you will have twenty sieges for one battel.’ \*

The Boer war is in some aspects unique, and a wise caution is necessary in generalising from its experiences.

In the middle of March the military situation was somewhat remarkable. The great flank movement of Lord Roberts had placed about 35,000 men at Bloemfontein, and given them railway communication, temporarily broken at the Orange River, with Cape Colony. Kimberley and Ladysmith were both relieved, and all strain on the extreme flanks ceased. A considerable body of Boers and colonial rebels, headed off by Lord Roberts, had begun to trek northwards along the Basuto frontier. It was evidently important to arrest this movement, to break up the enemy south of Bloemfontein, and to capture his convoys. Unfortunately the march from the Modder had told heavily on the British forces, and sickness was beginning to assert itself. The expenditure of horses had been excessive, and the surviving animals were weak and ineffective. The loss of the valuable convoy captured by the Boers had somewhat disorganised the transport, besides causing a depletion of supplies. The army had ceased to be mobile, and its many pressing needs could not at once be supplied. In place of striking at the Boers with strong flying columns, therefore, an attempt was made to establish a cordon between Bloemfontein and Ladybrand. This was necessarily a poor alternative to a vigorous offensive, and failure resulted. A force about 1,200 strong, with two horse artillery batteries, thus thrown out to the east, was compelled to withdraw, and was attacked at daylight on March 31 near the Bloemfontein waterworks, which had been left without a garrison. The artillery and transport were ordered to retire, and, from

indifferent scouting or some other culpable mistake, they fell into an ambush, losing seven guns and nearly 600 men, of whom 425 were taken prisoners. Only the conspicuous gallantry of the horse artillery redeemed a most humiliating incident. The loss of the waterworks, which were not occupied by our troops till April 23, proved gravely detrimental to the health of the army at Bloemfontein. Quickly realising that the mobility of the British forces was temporarily eclipsed, the Boers developed unexpected activity. A body of British infantry was surprised and surrendered near Reddersburg, twelve miles east of the railway on April 4, having forty-six killed and wounded and more than 400 prisoners. The circumstances of this unfortunate affair remain to be explained. Moving eastwards, the Boers attacked Wepener, which was successfully defended by colonial troops till relieved on April 25. The enemy now retreated northwards, escaping with their convoys unscathed.

During this fresh period of reverses the railway was never molested, and the process of supplying, equipping, and reorganising the army at Bloemfontein made steady progress. From the purely military point of view the Boers had obtained no important advantage, except the temporary occupation of the waterworks; but the political effect of their successes and of their ultimate escape was unfortunate, while General De Wet had learned lessons which later he proved well able to apply. The inevitable delay following the occupation of Bloemfontein thus detracted from the moral results of the capture of Cronje and of the relief of Ladysmith and of Kimberley. Moreover, a certain relaxation of care and of vigilance, of which the Boers took advantage, seems to have supervened. Their easy success at Reddersburg doubtless inspired the attack on Wepener, which happily diverted efforts from the important main line of communications.

After some weeks the army at Bloemfontein was reorganised and equipped, and on May 3 Lord Roberts started from Karee Siding, a point on the railway twenty-three miles north of the capital. On the following day Colonel Mahon, a young cavalry officer, crossed the Vaal at Barkly West in command of about 1,200 men, nearly all colonial troops, to relieve Mafeking. The distance of about two hundred miles was covered in twelve days, and a junction having been effected with Colonel Plumer's force, and with some Canadian and Queensland troops, who arrived from the north after a fine march, Mafeking was entered on May 17,

after a successful action on the previous day. The garrison had made a most gallant defence, and the civil population had shown admirable fortitude. In the rejoicings which followed, however, all sense of scale was hopelessly lost. Messages well calculated to concentrate attention upon Mafeking and its commander had arrived at sufficiently short intervals, and the British public, thus stimulated, indulged in unexampled demonstrations. Military history records successful defences in circumstances far more difficult than those of Mafeking, and while high praise was due to all ranks, and especially to Colonel Baden-Powell, the exaggeration of language which prevailed was an unwholesome symptom. The defenders of Kimberley and their commander, Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich, whose task was quite as onerous and quite as well discharged, were alike forgotten; and there was no recognition of the months of exposure and fighting endured by Colonel Plumer's force, which suffered greater hardships than the defenders of Mafeking.

The Boers at one time apparently contemplated a strong resistance to the advance on the Vaal, but in the open country north of Bloemfontein the threat of being outflanked sufficed to cause the hasty abandonment of successive positions. Advancing on a broad front, with a large mounted force on each flank, Lord Roberts reached Kroonstad on May 12, and halted to repair railway-bridges and to bring up supplies. On May 21 the forward movement was resumed, and the mounted force on the right flank was rapidly swung over to the left. The line of the Vaal was undefended, but the mounted troops were sharply engaged to the south-west of Johannesburg, which was occupied on the 31st. On June 4 some opposition was encountered, and on the following day Pretoria was surrendered. Thus in thirty-three days, including the halts at Kroonstad and Johannesburg, the army marched at least 270 miles, giving a fine proof of its mobility. In deciding upon this great movement Lord Roberts accepted certain inevitable risks and drawbacks. He left upon his right rear in the Free State a considerable force of the enemy which might be expected to make attempts upon his line of communications. His mounted force was certain to suffer heavily from the exhaustion of its horses, and another prolonged period of inactivity would necessarily follow. The advantage of an early occupation of Johannesburg and Pretoria was, however, so great that the decision was amply justified. The grip thus established upon the railway system of the Transvaal

was exceedingly important, and if politically the effect proved disappointing, the strategic gain was undoubted. It was now necessary to open up railway communication with Natal, to gain possession of the line from Klerksdorp to Johannesburg, to bring up forces from the western frontier, and, above all, to guard the main line from Bloemfontein.

On May 13 Sir R. Buller, who was directed 'to keep the enemy occupied in the Biggarsberg,' had concentrated a force eighteen miles east of Ladysmith, and moving rapidly northwards he occupied Newcastle on the 18th. There was no serious opposition, and the Boers fell back on Laing's Nek, where they ostentatiously entrenched themselves. On June 6, after granting a three days' armistice to General Louis Botha, Sir R. Buller occupied Botha's Pass with little difficulty, and, driving back the enemy, succeeded in turning the Laing's Nek position, which was promptly abandoned. Natal was at length clear of the invaders, and the British troops, moving along the railway and repairing it behind them, joined hands at Vlaktefontein on July 5 with a force from Heidelberg. By this time the Klerksdorp-Johannesburg line had also been occupied, and the whole railway system was in the hands of Lord Roberts with the exception of the line to Lorenzo Marques. On July 23 an advance in force along this line began, and Middelburg, about eighty-five miles east of Pretoria, was occupied on the 28th.

The rapid advance from Karee Siding to Pretoria was probably unexpected by the Boers, whose resistance was never serious and who showed great anxiety for their line of retreat. The menace of outflanking movements was most skilfully employed by Lord Roberts, and the four permanent forts which affected to defend the capital were incontinently abandoned, the Boers, more wise than the advisers of Napoleon III., being unwilling to incur the risks of a Sedan. Their leaders may have been inspired by the example of 1812; but, unlike the Russians, they were unwilling to sacrifice anything, and Pretoria became convenient headquarters for the British army.

The supervision of the line of communications at this period left much to be desired, and on May 30 at Lindley, and on June 6 at Roodeval, disasters occurred involving the loss of nearly 1,200 men. Lieut.-General Rundle, holding the line Senekal-Ficksburg, was able, with the help of entrenchments, to prevent an incursion of the enemy

southwards, but could effect nothing more in this difficult country, and was hampered for want of supplies. Passive measures proving hopeless to prevent raiding, it soon became evident that the Boer forces in the Bethlehem district must be broken up. Remounts having reached Pretoria, a strong force was despatched southwards, and on July 1 Lieut.-General Hunter reached Frankfort to co-operate with Major-Generals Clements and Paget. The effect of this offensive movement was most important. Bethlehem was captured on the 7th, and after a series of operations, admirably directed, Lieut.-General Hunter obtained on the 29th the surrender of Commandant Prinsloo with more than 4,000 men and a large number of much-needed horses. This substantial success was gained with small loss, and Harrismith was almost immediately occupied, opening up railway communication with Natal. General De Wet, however, the most capable and enterprising of the Boer leaders, broke away on July 16, and, crossing the railway, established himself near Reitzburg, a few miles south of the Vaal. Here he remained for eleven days and was believed to be practically surrounded; but, suddenly crossing the river on August 6, he outwitted his numerous pursuers, joining General Delarey near Rustenburg, and, after various adventures, doubling back upon the Vaal with the loss of a great part of his baggage and most of his followers. The escapade of De Wet had no direct military results of importance, but it added to difficulties already existing in the country west of Pretoria, and it entailed large and complicated movements of British forces which must have interfered with the plans of Lord Roberts.

A recrudescence of hostility had manifested itself early in July in the Rustenburg district, which was supposed to have been pacified during the march of Major-General Baden-Powell from the frontier to Pretoria. On the 7th a 'small force' of the enemy attacked Rustenburg, and on the 11th a body of troops of all arms sent from Pretoria to Uitval's Nek on the preceding day was surprised and routed with a loss of two guns. A Boer investment of Rustenburg followed, demanding a relieving force, and later the withdrawal of the garrison. Further west, at Eland's River, a small detachment of colonial troops under Colonel Hore was believed to be lost, but most gallantly held its post for many days till relieved on August 16 by Lord Kitchener, who had abandoned the pursuit of De Wet in order to go to its assistance. Meanwhile Major-General Carrington's force,

which landed at Beira in April, had arrived from Bulawayo, and, being opposed on the way to Eland's River, retired with some precipitation to Zeerust and thence to Mafeking. It is at present impossible to unravel the tangled skein of events in this region; but it is clear that before the irruption of De Wet from the south the burghers in the south-western portion of the Transvaal had developed unexpected strength and hostility. The circumstances throw a strong light on the difficulties of Lord Roberts, who had not to do with organised forces but with sporadic outbreaks, the extent of which could not be fully gauged.

During this irritating and baffling interlude the main thread of the operations was not neglected, and Sir R. Buller was directed to make an important movement northwards from the railway which he had been occupied in guarding since the middle of June. Leaving Paardekop on August 7, he reached a point about twenty miles south of Wonderfontein on the 15th. Some opposition was offered on the 23rd, and on the 25th Lord Roberts met Sir R. Buller and Lient.-Generals Pole-Carew and French at Belfast, and combined action was arranged. On the 27th a strong position near Bergendal was stormed by two infantry battalions after an effective artillery preparation, and the Boer resistance in this quarter collapsed. On September 1, the day on which the Transvaal was formally annexed to the British Crown, Sir R. Buller began an advance on Lydenburg, one of several places where the enemy were reported to intend making a final stand. The advance was delayed by the Boers, who retired when their flank was threatened, withdrawing their guns and stores, and leaving the way open to Lydenburg, which was reached by the cavalry on the 6th and occupied in force on the following day. Moving slowly eastwards through a most difficult country and encountering opposition which quickly yielded to attack, Sir R. Buller reached Spitz Kop on the 12th, capturing stores and ammunition. On the 10th, Lieut.-General French began an advance on Barberton, which was occupied on the 13th. On this day, the Guards Brigade reached Godwaan on the railway. Resistance being evidently hopeless, since the burghers no longer responded to the calls made upon them, Mr. Kruger decided to abandon his country and reached Lorenzo Marques on the 13th, after formally resigning office. At the same time General Louis Botha gave up the military command on the grounds of ill-health. On the 24th the

Guards Brigade reached Komati Poort and a large number of Boers crossed the frontier into Portuguese territory to be disarmed.

Meanwhile, minor raids on the railways occurred at various points, and a little garrison of 150 men at Ladybrand defended itself with trifling loss from the 2nd till relieved on the 5th. In the western portion of the theatre of war, mobile British columns were acting everywhere on the offensive, and capturing cattle and stores. The breakdown of the resistance in the Machadodorp and Lydenburg districts, where excellent defensive positions abound, indicated the military collapse of the Boers.

As Lord Roberts pointed out in an important proclamation on September 13, the war 'has degenerated into operations carried on in an irregular and irresponsible manner, and in very many cases by insignificant bodies of men.' Guerilla warfare of this description will break down as soon as it is clear that the game is not worth the candle. By holding firmly the important points on the railways, and by employing flying columns to patrol the disaffected districts, to pursue raiding parties, and to break up any concentration of commandos, hostility will be stamped out, and military operations can be replaced by police measures. We must, in any case, expect that a certain number of irreconcilables, believing that they have nothing to gain by peace, will continue to give trouble after the burghers have dispersed to their farms. It would be rash to attempt to forecast the future; but it is certain that the new colonies will require a garrison of at least 50,000 men for some years, even if the surrender of arms is much more complete than at present. Much will depend on the personal qualities of the military governor, who must soon be appointed, and having regard to past experience, there should be no mistake. A governor who combines firmness with sympathy, and who is a soldier and not a politician, will find less difficulty in restoring order than has been anticipated, and it may be that the real burgher population will prove more amenable to British rule than the cosmopolitan refugees now waiting to return to Johannesburg.

The Boer war will not rank among the great achievements of the British army. The immense disproportion between the numerical forces and the material resources of the combatants, the grave initial mistakes, and the too frequent 'regrettable incidents' combine to rob it of the glamour which attaches to military success. History will, however,

recognise the difficulties of an unexampled campaign, the vast distances which neutralised the advantage of numbers, and the great tracts of rugged country admirably adapted to defence by a people reared to the life of hill and veldt. The Boers have never been able to maintain more than about 50,000 men actually in the field, and from losses and gradual defections their numbers have latterly dwindled greatly. Of capacity for the conduct of war and of generalship they have shown little. In a theatre of war less extended and less rich in natural defensive positions, they would have been quickly overpowered. On the other hand, they have exhibited to the full the dogged tenacity of a race which more than any other tested the mettle of the navy of England, and in minor tactics they have frequently proved our superiors. Rarely surprised, they have often surprised and outwitted our leaders. To formalism they opposed individualism. The keen instincts of the hunter and his ingrained knowledge of the life of the field have been confronted by the artificial methods derived from a rigid and unintelligent training, the numbing effects of which could not easily be eradicated. As marksmen the Boers have not greatly shone, or our losses would have been much increased. Their ubiquitous artillery has proved singularly ineffective. On the other hand, their mobility as a wholly mounted force, and their marked proficiency as horse-masters, combined to give them definite advantages as soon as the war passed out of the stage of deadlock into operations ranging over great tracts of country. These advantages were not turned to full account, partly because the Boers as a whole were insufficiently disciplined to push home an attack, and partly because their leaders lacked strategic perception. From the time when the long, but inevitable halt at Bloemfontein encouraged a policy of raiding, they were still able to score points in the game. Even when Lord Roberts had established a grip upon the railway and telegraph systems, so that combined movements were almost impossible, individual leaders like De Wet showed powers of initiative, and, risking little, were quick to recognise a weak point. Lastly, the politico-military conditions favoured the resistance and the methods of the Boers. Every farmhouse might be a centre of intelligence, a dépôt of supplies, or an armoury. The whole countryside being in sympathy with the enemy, the British commanders had great difficulty in obtaining information, and could be plentifully supplied with false news. The clemency of Lord



Roberts permitted Boers who took the oath of neutrality to obtain more than the ordinary privileges of non-combatants, and to resume their arms at any favourable opportunity. Such men would have been shot without scruple by any European army; but stringent measures were at first avoided as being calculated to prejudice future conciliation, and thus, by example or by threats, a moving commando could reinforce itself locally for any special purpose.

An armed people occupying a difficult country have always proved awkward antagonists to a regular army. La Vendée, a little territory of 1,100 square miles, withstood veteran troops for a full year, and at one period 200,000 men were brought to bear upon it. The task of Lord Roberts was to subjugate a La Vendée of 167,000 square miles, defended by a population numerically far smaller than that which long defied the armies of the French Republic, but infinitely better armed, better prepared for war, and much more united, while the methods which, in the one case, secured tardy success after about 130,000 persons of both sexes and all ages had perished, were, in the other, impossible. The parallel is not complete, but it serves to illustrate difficulties which have not been adequately recognised in this country, and it is well to remember that our reverses in South Africa have been trivial affairs in comparison with the defeats inflicted on the French troops by the gallant fanatics of La Vendée. It was the opinion of experts whose impressions were mainly formed at Johannesburg that moderate losses would suffice to break up the Boer forces. The nature of the country, and the tactics adopted in most cases, precluded heavy losses in individual engagements, and the total number of Boers killed in action has probably not been large; but the surrender of two large bodies, each exceeding 4,000 men, the failures at Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking, and the occupation of every town of any importance, failed to bring about immediate demoralisation. A people more highly organised, more imaginative and less patriotic would have admitted defeat after the fall of Pretoria. Inability to realise the overwhelming superiority of force opposed to them, and false statements sedulously propagated by their leaders, may in part account for the protracted resistance offered by the Boers; but in their dogged tenacity of purpose there is something which the British people cannot fail to admire. Irregular forces, not wholly amenable to discipline, not even commanded in the sense understood in all professional armies, and containing in their ranks selections

from the scum of Europe, would inevitably commit acts contrary to the usages of war, and calculated to arouse bitter resentment. On the other hand, such leaders as Joubert, Louis Botha, and De Wet, as well as some of the rank and file, have proved chivalrous foes. When calm judgement has supplanted political rancour, the popular estimate of the character of the Boers will probably undergo favourable modification. Only a people imbued with the spirit of true patriotism would have so strenuously upheld their independence.

To the British Army the war has brought many painful lessons. An imperfect organisation, indifferent training, and want of political and military foresight terribly hampered the operations at the outset. Heavy losses, national humiliation, and extravagant expenditure were the inevitable penalties. Our military system, as has been pointed out, was totally unable to meet the emergency which arose in September 1899. At a crisis when the despatch of an organised field force to South Africa was urgently needed, the system proved hopelessly wanting, as had been foretold. And when the machine had at length ground out an army corps lacking the essential attributes of its German prototype, the result was a force which had to be taken to pieces and reconstructed before it was fit for offensive war. The army which marched from the Modder to Bloemfontein and onwards by rapid strides to Pretoria was organised by Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener in South Africa, not by the War Office in London. Even inferior units were partly destroyed by additions and subtractions till the British infantry battalion, as it should have been, almost ceased to exist. Our system of mounted infantry was based upon the disintegration of battalions by robbing them of some of their best officers and men, whose places had to be filled by Militia reservists and Volunteers imperfectly trained. To meet an urgent need for mounted troops, the Imperial Yeomanry was hastily improvised, consisting principally of men who were not yeomen. The Militia alone could reinforce the regular army by organised units, and the wholesale volunteering of its battalions for active service showed the high spirit of the old constitutional force. The Militia had, however, suffered from years of cold neglect, and its battalions were undermanned and indifferently trained. Ten thousand individual volunteers responded to the call of patriotism; but even companies had to be created afresh for the purposes of the war. The fine contingents from Canada and Australasia

were in many respects better fitted for the special requirements of the campaign than our auxiliary forces at home, and the local knowledge of the South African volunteers was capable, as Lord Roberts was quick to recognise, of being turned to excellent account.

Field training in this country offers certain difficulties which only a drastic Manœuvres Act could wholly overcome; but the training which the army was accustomed to receive was unnecessarily defective. Scouting, which does not come by nature to the class from which our cavalry is drawn and requires the most careful practical instruction, was neglected, and this essential duty had to be learned in South Africa at a heavy cost of life and prestige. The British cavalryman was too heavily equipped for irregular warfare, and the horse's ration, even when it could be provided, was insufficient for the work expected. As in previous wars, the art of the horse-master, in which the Boers excelled, proved to be wanting, with the result of an immense expenditure of horseflesh. Formal movements had consumed too much of the time of the infantryman, and tactics proper suffered accordingly. The individual training which sharpens the wits of the soldier, and teaches him to exercise his judgement in the use of ground and on outpost and patrol duties, was quite inadequate. Mechanical volleys had usurped the place of intelligent skirmishing. Examinations entailing an extensive system of cramming were regarded as trustworthy tests of the proficiency of officers, and applied military science consequently languished. The many costly mistakes committed in South Africa had their counterpart in peace manœuvres in which the rules of the game of war were not enforced with sufficient rigour. The artillery, more carefully instructed and more practically trained than the other arms, has distinctly increased its reputation. Alike for shooting power, for discipline, and for resourcefulness, it has earned high praise. The effect of shrapnel fire on an enemy sheltered by entrenchments, or crouching behind the boulders which strewed the tops of the numberless kopjes, was necessarily slight, and the natural conditions of the country were rarely favourable to artillery action. In such cases, all that can be expected of this arm is to keep down the enemy's fire. So well was this task performed that both cavalry and infantry learned to lean upon the guns to an extent previously unknown. Neither will again incline towards teachers who underrate the value of horse and field artillery. In the handling of

the heavy batteries extemporised for the purposes of the war, equal skill was shown, and, except in the unfortunate battle of Colenso, no blame has been thrown upon the artillery. In this case the facts remain to be elicited. The handling of the guns by the generals in the field was at first conspicuously defective. In the battle at Modder River, mainly an artillery action on the British side, and elsewhere, no proper orders were forthcoming, and artillery officers practically made their own dispositions. On the other hand, in the attack on Pieter's Hill, and later at Bergendal Farm, the guns were employed in accordance with sound principles, and their effect in supporting the infantry attack was marked.

In an army in which exalted rank could be attained by officers who had never given practical proof of their capacity for handling a brigade, it was inevitable that the rude test of war should disclose incompetence. Even in the case of minor posts, social and other influences have played far too great a part in so-called selection. When to these sources of weakness was added an improvised staff, not knowing and unknown by the troops which it was to direct, much is explained. It is a British habit to trust overmuch to improvisation as a substitute for method, and in this respect the army is not singular among our national institutions. The South African war has given occasion for improvisation on a great scale. The forces now in the field bear little resemblance to those which our military system prescribes. Many causes have combined to break up units and to destroy their solidarity. A somewhat loose aggregate of troops has thus arisen, and has happily been opposed only by a still looser military organisation. The natural adaptability of our race went far to mitigate disadvantages which in other circumstances would have entailed danger, and a process of weeding brought to the front many capable young officers who will exercise an important influence upon the future training of the army.

Painful as are some of the aspects of the war, there is a bright side which must never be forgotten. The British soldier has again manifested the sterling qualities which have shone on a thousand fields. The regimental officers, with few exceptions, have led their men with conspicuous gallantry, and the heavy loss of nearly  $7\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.\* from

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\* The corresponding loss of officers in the Franco-German War was about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. ('The Times,' September 1).

wounds tells its tale of personal devotion. If there have been 'regrettable incidents,' there have also been numerous incidents of collective and individual heroism. The colonial troops have shown fine fighting qualities, and have nobly upheld the great military traditions of the British people. At a time of real national difficulty the Colonies, as those who knew them confidently expected, have given the most practical proof of their patriotism and have inaugurated a new Imperial era. War, with its losses and its sorrows, has drawn closer all the members of the Empire, and has taught mutual understanding and mutual confidence. The great work of transporting more than 200,000 men across the sea and of supplying them has been accomplished with marked success, and the scope of our unrivalled national resources has been practically demonstrated. The way has been made straight for a military organisation based upon Imperial requirements, embracing the splendid fighting material at our disposal and effectually guaranteeing peace, progress, and prosperity. If this great work is now accomplished, the heavy sacrifices which the South African war has entailed will not have been made in vain. If the many bitter lessons of the past year are not turned to account intelligently and with special care to avoid hasty generalisations from a campaign which has many abnormal features, we shall before long be brought face to face with national disaster. It is remedies earnestly and thoroughly applied that are needed, not recriminations. There have been many mistakes which must never recur, and the promised inquiry, if carried out in the right spirit, will point the way to the necessary reforms. The words spoken in the House of Commons by Cromwell, greatest of British army reformers, deserve to be recalled:—

'As I must acknowledge myself guilty of oversights, so I know that they can rarely be avoided in military matters. Therefore, waiving a strict inquiry into the causes of these things, let us apply ourselves to the remedy which is most necessary. And I hope that we have such true English hearts and zealous affections towards the general weal of our mother country as no member of either House will scruple to deny themselves and their own private interests for the public good.'

In this spirit, broadened and deepened by the responsibilities of Empire, should our military problems be now approached. Thus only can our 'New Model' be attained.

ART. II.—*M. Edmond Rostand and the Literary Prospects of the Drama.*

*La Samaritaine.* Evangile en trois tableaux, en vers. Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle: 1898.

*Cyrano de Bergerac.* Comédie Héroïque, en vers. Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle: 1898.

*Les Romanesques.* Comédie en trois actes, en vers. Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle: 1899.

*La Princesse Lointaine.* Pièce en quatre actes, en vers. Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle: 1899.

*L'Aiglon.* En six actes, en vers. (Unpublished: 1900.)

THE Drama, the oldest and the most complicated of the Arts, is, strangely enough, the only art for which there is no margin of opportunity. For a play succeeds or it fails. Architecture, music, painting, every form of literature not written directly for production before the footlights, can count upon incalculable chances of revision; of reconsideration; of suspended judgement, and even of fluctuating esteem. But the fortunes of a stage-play can only be absolute. On the stage alone there is no appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober. The stage-play, the drama under modern conditions, can only live in so far as it can pay for its footing night by night. For the art of the modern drama is above all things art exploited as commerce. It is the reproduction of human accident and human emotion moving, with more or less of force and dexterity, between the excisions of the Censor and the exigencies of the box-office; bound by every circumstance of its production to conquer the approval of a crowd within the first few hours of its existence, or, in sober fact, to cease to exist.

No other art lives under similar conditions. And in spite of the remarkable revival of public interest in things relating to the theatre which has taken place in England during the last twenty-five years—an interest generous enough to include the private idiosyncrasies and adventures, the incomes, the wardrobes, and the opinions of actors and actresses—it is perhaps uncertain, if we judge from our own dramatists exclusively, whether these conditions have not finally severed that connexion between the stage and literature which the Elizabethans did so much to establish. In the same way that the influences of our climate, the size of our modern houses, and our disuse as meeting-places

of public buildings, have limited the field for sculpture, so it may be that the cost and money-making necessities of our theatres will end by strictly limiting the intellectual proportions of the modern play. Already there are not wanting critics, steady, sober and honest, lovers of the drama, and yet disposed to regard the little brotherhood of modern dramatists, groping their way in worlds of art half realised, as so many children at play in some old curiosity-shop; a place where all the material is worn; is very old; made precious by dead and gone effort; and where the only novelty possible consists in some new anachronism. For fanatics such as these the Days of Creation are strictly limited to six. The Greek dramatists, the Latins, Shakespeare, have spoken the last word of a noble and a living art; and to our generation only remains the no less vital, but simpler, evolution of the music-hall.

Obviously this is a defensible point of view. And so is the point of view which advocates a State theatre, subsidised; respected; controlled on something of the lines of the Théâtre Français, as a protest against our present system of the actor-manager; of opportunist and ephemeral writing; and of protracted runs. Although whether this latter scheme, given the protestant and inartistic attitude of the average Anglo-Saxon mind, can ever be more than a counsel of perfection, seems doubtful, to say the least. Yet the opportunist play, however brilliant, the play designed to run its season like any other fashionable object, though it may be a valuable piece of property, can hardly be a valuable contribution to literature; and, while admitting unreservedly that success on the English stage does not in the smallest degree depend upon a *conscious* preoccupation with the art of the drama (unconscious preoccupation there must be, or there could be no play)—it would be interesting to inquire whether, and how far, such a consciousness would necessarily imperil that success? We are as a nation only too apt to plume ourselves over our least obviously artistic achievements. Yet if the gaiety, the good temper, the abounding animal spirits of, say, ‘Charley’s Aunt’ have kept that joyous production alive for some thousands of triumphant nights, it is only fair to remember that ‘Antony and Cleopatra’ has lasted longer still. It is not the presence of the literary quality, it is the deadness of the literary quality present, the deficiency of it, the affectation of it, the imitation of it, which send so many of the so-called ‘serious’ plays hurtling down the dusty steepes of theatrical

failure. Because a thing which is vital, commonly handled, has the power to live, need a thing as vital, but delicately and beautifully manipulated, run a distinctly poorer chance? Not treatment, not selection, but life—vitality—an organic being, is the very first essential and condition of the dramatic art. It is the first—*mais après?*

Journalism, the ideal journalism, consists in formulating brilliantly what the man in the street was on the verge of saying. And there are hundreds and hundreds of definitely successful plays—and therefore living plays—which never rise for one moment in point of treatment above the level of smart and workmanlike journalism—of journalism which is to literature what a wall-paper is to a picture. You must be able to command it in large quantities before it begins to count. And it is precisely because the public attention has been so strenuously called upon to take note of these restricted successes, it is because the public imagination has been so fired by the financial interests which they represent, that any discussion of the literary side of the drama appears so irrelevant and academic. *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien* to every non-artistic conscience; and 'capacity for the nobler feeling,' said Stuart Mill long ago, 'is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance.' As a race we British do more than distrust—we dislike all conscious experiments in art, not apologised for and made reputable by age, or death, or tradition. To hurl a brick-bat at the passing 'literary' wherever detected in daily life, serves, in some fashion, to vindicate the choice of pleasures of The Plain Citizen. And indeed the literary quality as he understands it—'art' considered as something extraneous to life, 'art' visualised as a collection of black old masters and the minor poets, 'art' as an attitude, an excrescence, a reminiscence—deserves much of the peculiar form of encouragement he is prepared to offer.

Naturally this does not affect the fact that in all real art (as Spinoza says of morality) *imitation has no place*. Success, even the vulgarest success, can neither be copied nor forged precisely because of the modicum of artistic presentation which every living record of life contains. And if we set aside as too local, too near to us for illustrative criticism, our own still somewhat unclassified playwrights—without attempting to count the various measures of success attained by Mr. Pinero; by Mr. Parker; by Mr. Bernard Shaw; by Captain Marshall's neat and happy fantasy; or



by the industry of Mr. Grundy—it is surely possible to expect many precious things still of an art which has so lately blossomed into work so experimental in purpose, so classic in treatment, so flexible, so vivid, so full-fed, as the brilliant group of plays we owe to M. Edmond Rostand. And it matters little, considered from the point of view of the wealth of the contemporary drama, that we should quote the works of a foreigner, a Frenchman; since it is surely one of the divine attributes of art that what enriches one enriches all. When M. Rostand, not content with the ordinary problems and difficulties of stage-craft, deliberately assumes the additional burden of expressing himself exclusively in rhymed verse, he adopts a literary attitude towards the drama, and exhibits a force of literary passion for the purities of form which is noticeable even in France. His is an extreme case. For him as for Gautier:—

. . . l'œuvre sort plus belle  
D'une forme au travail  
Rebelle,  
Vers, marbre, onyx, émail ; . . .

and his work—which is ours, a part of our intellectual capital, exactly in proportion to our capacity for enjoying it—may well serve to illustrate what is really the pressing question, 'la question du jour,' of the ambitious modern play-writer,—*How far, under actual conditions of theatrical production, does the literary quality make or mar the fortunes of the contemporary play?*

He has given us five plays—'Les Romanesques,' a comedy in three acts, produced at the Comédie Française in 1894, and crowned by the French Academy; a four-act play, 'La Princesse Lointaine,' which appeared at the Renaissance Theatre, with Madame Sarah Bernhardt in the title rôle, in 1895; 'La Samaritaine' in April of 1897, also produced by the same actress, and described as 'An Evangel, in three tableaux;' 'Cyrano de Bergerac,' a heroic comedy in five acts, which also appeared in 1897, at the Porte Saint-Martin; and 'L'Aiglon,' a drama written in no less than six acts, treating of the life and death of the young Duc de Reichstadt, the son of Napoleon I., and again with Madame Bernhardt as chief interpreter. This last play is actually on the stage in Paris, and, at the moment we write, is still unrevised and unpublished. 'Cyrano de Bergerac' and the 'Romanesques' (under the title of 'The Fantasticks') were both acted in English, and in London, for a brief period last season. Neither Mr. Wyndham

as Cyrano nor Mrs. Patrick Campbell as Percinet achieved a popular success.

It has been stated—we do not know with how much authority—that the ‘Samaritaine’ is an earlier work than its gay, delicate, Watteau-like predecessor. It is in any case a striking, occasionally a very beautiful, example of that re-awakened cult for the beautiful, the mystic, and the suggestive which found its chief expression among ourselves in Burne-Jones, in William Morris, and in Rossetti; which inspired Maeterlinck and Verlaine, and has influenced Huysmans and all the younger *littérateurs* in France. All sincere reactions from the irreligious attitude of mind are interesting. But what makes M. Rostand’s work of far greater value than any of the attempts to revive the old miracle play—any of the biblical paraphrases and parables of M. Antoine’s theatre—is the mastery of effect and technique, the scenic sense, the theatrical intelligence, with which he handles his material. The story is the story of the Woman of Samaria. But what, in other hands, could so easily have degenerated into a series of rhetorical declamations and piously panoramic scenes, is here moulded with an extraordinary tact and delicacy into the vague and yet convincing outlines of a genuine drama. Any representation of Christ upon the stage is inherently objectionable to the average Anglo-Saxon mind, unless, as at Oberammergau, the physical conditions are such as to do away with all the ordinary associations of the playhouse. It is, perhaps, to be regretted, in our own interest, that this absence of the friendly German-peasant environment, and of the German-peasant method of acting, should make such a difference in our sense of the decorous and the becoming. Photine, the Samaritan courtesan, impassioned and detached as a prayer or a flame, wandering down the grey hillside among the olives to find the unknown Master waiting by the well; or in the market-place, drawing the indifferent jeering town about her by the single intensity of her purpose, is an extraordinarily interesting example of the working of the dramatic instinct about an old and worn theme. There is, perhaps, some far-off echo of Russian mysticism, some reminiscence of the humble, ardent, *illuminated* heroines of Tolstoy and of Dostoëvsky, in M. Rostand’s conception of Photine; at moments in her impassioned and pathetic faith we seem to hear speaking the mystical sister of the Sonia of ‘Crime and Punishment,’ but with what a distinguishing sense of beauty has he not

marked as his own, and rescued even the most hazardous passages of his work! That a few—a very few—of his verses should seem to our ears to border perilously upon the irreverently grotesque and the ridiculous was inevitable, considering his theme. Humour is as local as patriotism. When Lamartine, writing the history of his own time in his old age, describes a fierce political meeting which he addressed from the balcony of the Hôtel de Ville, and sighs, ‘*Mon Dieu, alors, comme j’étais beau!*’ he gives an example of detached observation and unselfconsciousness which not one Anglo-Saxon in a million ever reaches. But, apart from these slight incongruities, how admirable is the handling of ‘*La Samaritaine*’! With what precision is the situation put before us! Done with how few words, and yet how definitely, is the characterisation of the individual disciples; the arch-priest; the merchants; how swiftly and unconsciously we find ourselves informed of the political situation, the warring interests, all the complicated policy of the little inconspicuous mountain town!

It is chiefly the difference in the quality—*la facture*—of the verse which inclines us to consider ‘*Les Romanesques*’ as later work. ‘I do not tell you that the subject of this ‘comedy is new at all points,’ says M. Jules Lemaitre, ‘but its execution appears to me remarkable. This is brilliant stuff; all sparkling with wit, and, in places, glowing with a large and easy sense of gaiety. It is not to be confounded with the pretty little play, the elaborate little stage jewel of slender value. . . . There is already the large grasp of craft-mastery in “*Les Romanesques*.”’ And further on the wittiest and most authoritative of dramatic critics comments on the analogy in lovely lightness of treatment between M. Rostand’s little piece and the classic ‘*A quoi rêvent les jeunes filles?*’ of Alfred de Musset. ‘But ‘Rostand,’ he goes on to say, ‘conveys an impression of frank lightheartedness and plastic grace—a thing become rare among us where Beauty seems more and more the inseparable companion of Sadness.’ And it is, indeed, this very deliverance from all modern morbidity, this return to a clearer atmosphere and an antique joyousness, which gives Rostand’s work an indisputable distinction of its own. Emotion without regret;—a gallant acceptance of life with all its possibilities and without many of its more harassing questions—that is the keynote of his work. But the refusal to investigate these questions comes from choice and not from insensibility. It is this spirit of delight in

exquisite and precise form, this happy play with charming words and images, and gay, and fleeting, and delicate sensation, which differentiates 'Les Romanesques' from the thousand and one *poudré* plays of the French repertory. 'The time of the play is immaterial,' says the author in his stage directions, 'provided the costumes be pretty;' and the little lovers, delighted and absorbed in their own fantastic elusive likeness to Romeo and Juliet, live through one endless summer day—under the old trees of an old park, where an old wall symbolises the old obstacles old fathers place before young love—with the spontaneous grace and fleeting troubles of the Golden Age. This is the land of pure romance; the land bordered by the green and rustling Forest of Arden, and stretching to the seaports of Bohemia. The story we are asked to follow dates from the first careless pair of lovers, and was acted by the first careful parent. But if you would have an example of how ingeniously M. Rostand can weave and complicate the simple threads of the simplest situation, consider for one moment his joyous invention of Straforel—that swaggering and full-blown predecessor of the picturesque Cyrano. Resourceful; unscrupulous; largely conversant with men, women, and things; at home in the world which he reverences and exploits; extravagant, magnificent, and at his wit's end for his day's earnings; vain; gross; indulgent; vital;—Straforel, by the cunning of his author's art, is set upon his feet and stalks about fairyland with as assured a tread as Poins or bully Bardolph among the Kentish lanes. Indeed, in breadth and ease of treatment Straforel is, perhaps, the most Shakespearian of M. Rostand's figures; while, as an acting part, the *rôle* is well-nigh actor-proof.

And the student interested in our author's methods should not fail to note how, in this early work, we find all the leading characteristics of his later and more ambitious writings. The construction, the peculiar breaking-up of his verse, are already here. The long scenes during which a single word is repeated and reiterated with ever-increasing effect have already been invented. The varying 'Monsieur . . . ' 'Mais, Monsieur . . . ' of Sylvette when Straforel makes reckless and alarming love to her\* is but a foreshadowing of the tender, tragic, pathetic revelation to Bergerac of Roxane's unattainable love. This deliberate insistence upon the culminative value of a single word—a mere

exclamation—struck upon again and again, as upon a bell, by the same actor, and under circumstances which change before the spectator's eyes, is a very striking example of M. Rostand's admirable stage-craft. It is worth noticing, too, how Straforel's big *tirade* is led up to precisely as, later on, we shall approach Cyrano's. From the first, it would seem that M. Rostand had found his personal form of expression without having to fumble for it. His verse is of a consistent and really amazing flexibility. We know of nothing like it. In his hands the old, classic, buckrammed alexandrine of Corneille or Racine has become fluent, epigrammatic, and supple as the most fluid prose. It is not too much to say that he delights in difficulty; he plays with technical problems, and invents complications only to solve them with a light heart. For scene after scene he limits his actors' 'lines' to speeches of two, three, half a dozen, words. He breaks his verse into fragments, which he polishes until they scintillate like diamond dust; until it requires an effort of the hearer's memory to realise that this flashing, hurrying sword-play of dialogue is yet submitted to all the stringent rules and conditions of poetic composition. Never since Victor Hugo wrote 'Les Misérables' has the French language given us such an example of astonishing abundance of words, of wit, of dexterity, and of richness of epithet. It is well-nigh a debauch of epithet. As the French say, 'Ça coule de source.' It would be almost impossible to conceive anything more apparently easy and untrammelled, or to find anything which, on examination, showed more evidence of a scrupulous art. Compare, for instance, the living torrents, the waterfalls, the singing brooks, and swirling millraces of Rostand's agile and clear-cut verse to the large, lazy wash of the 'Earthly Paradise'! And yet—as we shall endeavour to point out later on—it is precisely in this exuberant mastery of his material, in this richness of invention, in the extraordinary *vision* that he has of the remotest dramatic possibilities of any incident, that Rostand's danger lies.

This is not the case in 'La Princesse Lointaine'—that latest version of the story of Rudel and the Lady of Tripoli—which is, to us, the most daring, as it is the most perfect, of M. Rostand's experiments. It is the author, indeed, who shows himself 'le partisan des aventures hautes:'

'Oui, je suis partisan des aventures hautes.  
Et près de celle-ci que sont les Argonautes ?

Elle est lyriquement épique cette nef,  
 Qui vole, au bruit des vers, un poète pour chef,  
 Pleine d'anciens bandits dont nul ne se rebelle,  
 Vers une douce femme, étrange, pure et belle,  
 Sans aucun autre espoir que d'arriver à temps  
 Pour qu'un mourant la voie encor quelques instants !  
 Ah ! l'inertie est le seul vice, maître Erasme !  
 Et la seule vertu, c'est. . . .'

*Erasme.*

Quoi ?

*Frère Trophime.*

L'enthousiasme !'

It is worth stopping to reflect upon what burning, disinterested enthusiasm for Letters, what passion for pure Beauty and the haunting magic of the past, was required to inspire a modern Parisian with the desire to place such a legend upon the modern stage.

Geffroy Rudel, the Prince of Blaye in Aquitaine, hearing, from the divers pilgrims who had visited Tripoli, of the exceeding fairness of Melissinde, the princess of that state, loved the lady with an exceeding fervour. And, setting sail for Tripoli some time in 1160 or 1161, he fell ill by the way of an illness which caused his death, so that when his ship came to port he was too weak to reach the shore. Therefore was the lady acquainted with his piteous state, and coming to the ship to greet him, presently he died, but first had seen her face. That is the subject of M. Rostand's play.

Robert Browning had already written of it; and Heine, in those magical verses of the *Romancero* (which may well have suggested to Matthew Arnold the background for his 'Tristram and Isolde'), tells us how the dim tapestries of the ancient castle of Blaye stir on the windy moonlight nights remembering the story wrought upon them at the hands of Melissinde. Browning sings of the distant lady :—

' O Angel of the East, one one gold look  
 Across the waters to this twilight nook—  
 The far, sad waters, Angel, to this nook ! . . . '

it was left to M. Rostand to reveal to us the full dramatic capabilities of the immortal legend.

For, to Melissinde, in her lily-strewn room of state, receiving the French pilgrims in all her weary gentleness, there comes, not Rudel indeed, of whose great love she is aware, and for whose love her life is spent in waiting, but Bertrand, the troubadour, Rudel's messenger and closest friend. And Melissinde loves Bertrand because of his

valour, and because of his beauty, but chiefly because at his coming the silent prison-palace of Tripoli has had its doors forced open by new life. She loves him and she tempts him. Rudel is lying in his ship in port, waiting for her greeting; but Bertrand is present, and Rudel is far off, and dying. In a scene of extreme and concentrated vigour, Melissinde overcomes Bertrand's conscience; his loyalty to his friend; his remorse; and almost his remembrance. But through the high open casement at the back of the stage, beyond the palace terrace, stretches the blue line of the open harbour. And on Rudel's ship, the weary mariners—*les anciens bandits*—waiting to see the promised lady, have sworn to raise a black sail in signal if Rudel dies. As the action advances, as Bertrand falters and yields, the terror, the obsession, the possibility of what they may see, through that open window, grows and grows with an astonishing power. 'You can only speak to me of 'the window,' says Bertrand in his shame. And Melissinde fiercely denies it. And Melissinde closes the window. And again the sea-wind silently throws it wide, until, at the last, they sit side by side, crouching upon the divan by the farther wall—*dans ces lâches coussins*—not daring to look, not able to forget, lashed by conscience and tortured by desire—in a scene of which the passionate modernity of feeling never for one instant disturbs the poet's vision of ancient beauty and the illusion of a great remoteness. The whole character of Bertrand, with its mixture of chivalry and self-consciousness (*d'autres, moins prompts au bien, au mal seraient plus lents . . .*) is an admirable and careful study of a type, as convincing under all its masks of costume, and period and environment, as the most 'realistic' hero in a drama by M. Dumas, fils. After all, it is only an ungenerous and ill-fermented new wine which cannot be safely poured into the most precious of old bottles.

In 'La Princesse Lointaine' M. Rostand seems to us to touch the high-water mark of his literary achievement. In 'Cyrano de Bergerac,' the best known of his plays, and the first to be translated into English, it is possible already to foresee how his manner of composition may, unless he be aware and watchful, decline into mannerism. All the opening scenes of 'Cyrano' are more intelligible to read than to see acted (and this in spite of Monsieur Coquelin's inimitable sense of precise comedy). In much of the act at the Hôtel de Bourgogne the most elaborate stage management cannot protect the spectator from a

suggestion of confusion—of a too glittering and teasing brilliancy of language, and interruption of incident. And, having said this, we need only turn again to the work itself—refer once more to its astonishing pages—to be won anew and bribed to silence, so to speak, by our overriding admiration. In this mood, to say of ‘Cyrano’ that it is too elaborate is like objecting to some vigorous forest tree that its leafage is confusing. And the comparison holds good on this point—that ‘Cyrano de Bergerac’ is as structural and organic as a noble tree. In France, it is necessary to go back to Molière and to Beaumarchais to find anything of equal dramatic fulness of conception, of equal reach and lightness of touch. Figaro in his abounding wit and play, his suggestion (like the suggestion of some brilliant contemporary) of untapped resources, is the only figure on the French stage to be compared with it; and Figaro has not Cyrano’s poetry, nor his sense of natural beauty, nor his pathos.

It is worth noting that M. Rostand’s mind finds all its rich material without once touching the *passionnel* themes of the ordinary French drama. He is vivid, emotional, impassioned, without an allusion to, or a glance at, the peculiar side of literature and manners we are complacently agreed to label as ‘French.’ Indeed, it may be questioned if there were more than two genuinely successful new plays running upon the London stage last season which would not have suffered on this point in comparison with M. Rostand’s collected work. ‘Art,’ says Goethe in his famous definition, ‘Art is a liberation.’ In this case, the passion for art would seem to have delivered a very modern Parisian from much which still excites a contented laugh among his grosser and less literary neighbours.

It was impossible that at his age—M. Rostand is barely thirty—and after a solid, palpable, financial success which even dwarfs the imposing ‘returns’ of a ‘Sign of the Cross’ or a ‘Trilby’—the creator of Cyrano should escape many pointed reminders of the fallibility of human genius. France is not a country where literature can often compete with trade, or even lead to a very serious banking account. M. Rostand has not lacked for candid critics. They reproach him with being abundant—superabundant, they call it; of at times losing sense and grasp of the body of his dramatic action in the multiplicity, the ingeniousness of its turns and twists and windings. This is undoubtedly the threatening fault of his quality; it is only fair to remember



this; but it is wise to remind ourselves that the quality is there as well as the fault. For, in an age of careful and systematic intellectual husbandry, we are perhaps a little apt to forget how much was condoned to an ancient sinner because she had loved—much. Certainly, to look at the mere enumeration of the persons of the play in a drama like 'Cyrano,' to recount the famous 'fifty-eight speaking parts,' and to reperuse the catalogue of the author's stage directions—'citizens, marquises, pastrycooks, poets, cadets, Gascons, comedians, fiddlers, pages, children, Spanish soldiers, spectators, female spectators, actresses, burghers' wives, fine ladies, nuns—and the crowd,' may well give one a tingling sense of intellectual richness and adventure. And observe that these characters, even the smallest of them, are there for a purpose; are created and responsible. At his best, M. Rostand gives us to a singular degree the sensation of that capacity to see and handle a crowd which only belongs to the highest type of creative vision. We feel that, were he interested in their coming, a score or a hundred more figures could troop upon his stage through the open doors and from the great hospitable antechambers of his imagination.

Balzac, George Sand, Dumas the elder, our own Dickens, had each much of this same joyful and imposing play of the liberal imagination. Dickens's genius again more closely resembles that of M. Rostand in his scrupulous and instinctive avoidance of even the technically immoral, and all the outlawed complications of life. It is a coincidence which we would insist upon since it materially adds to our perplexed recognition of M. Rostand's comparative failure upon the English boards. Here, at last, is 'pure' literary art with a vengeance—art as clear-eyed and unsuggestive of hidden ugliness as a schoolboy's vision of existence; and yet deliberate, and serious, and highly polished art. Here is no lack of romantic and daring action. The delight in life, and in the adventure of life, has never been more fully, more beautifully expressed. Here, too, is an unquestioned mastery of pure stage-craft; the scenic gift; the theatrical judgement. Here are brave and intricate plots, joyous encounters, characters magnanimous and witty, chivalric and picturesque, and sympathetic—'sympathetic' even beyond an actor-manager's fond dream. And yet, as we have already said, neither Mrs. Campbell's charm and beauty, nor all Mr. Wyndham's force of personality and fine mastery of his profession, were sufficient to persuade the

British public to the feast. Can it be that during its long protest against foreign ways and foreign nastiness—its long and plaintive demand for the romantic, the moving, and the pure—the British stage, hibernating, so to speak, in the somewhat gloomy cave of its own virtues, has acquired a taste for the less simple forms of food? The image of some well-intentioned polar bear, secure on its own iceberg, borne on strange and insidious currents to awake in tropic seas, is a vision which, if ridiculous, is also suggestive of danger.

In America we hear of 'Cyrano' achieving a stage triumph. We hear, too, that a translation of 'L'Aiglon,' by Mr. Louis Parker, is shortly to be produced in New York. Rumour adds that the original text of the play is to be shortened—at all events in the acting version. In Paris it is given as it was written—in six very long acts. The subject-matter of the 'Aiglon' is more strictly limited in general interest than much of M. Rostand's earlier work. The last pages of the great Napoleonic legend are of a more burning significance in France. Before judging of 'L'Aiglon' as a play—strictly as stage work—those who had the fortune to see Madame Bernhardt in it last summer must not only endeavour to break loose from the illuminating remembrance of a consummate piece of acting; they will do well to forget the waves of enthusiasm which swept her audiences at each telling, ringing, audacious reference to the political fortunes of France. To the foreigner, alien to this factitious interest, M. Rostand's last great effort often seems a somewhat dangerously elaborated piece of eloquence. The character of the young Duc de Reichstadt—Napoleon's son, with the blood of the Austrian making question in his veins—has been compared to the character of Hamlet. But Hamlet, it is well to remember, was ever *capable* of action. It is doubtful whether, to the groundling of the pit in Shakespeare's time, Hamlet was not less the thinker we have made of him than simply the struggling man of action. The death of Polonius: the high, stern renouncement of Ophelia: the players' scene when he defies the king in open court: Laertes' death: the king's death:—when the play was new it is easy to imagine how the tragic incidents would jostle our later conception of the melancholy and philosophic prince.

And, on the stage, every situation, every human emotion but one is possible: the stage will not accept a representa-

tion of ultimate failure. Othello is perhaps the only, the magnificent, exception to this rule. And even Othello chooses to kill himself: he does not accept defeat.

But in M. Rostand's last drama the Eaglet never once lifts on the wings of the Eagle. Hesitating, interesting, and impotent in the first act, the pale young prince is hesitating and impotent in the last. It is a poignant moral tragedy; but is it drama? M. Rostand himself seems to have felt something of this uncertainty about his subject. He loads his work with curious and fascinating incident. The tailor, with his marvellous costumes for the dandy and his hidden plans for the duke's escape; the wooden soldiers which Flambeau, the old Cent Garde, has painted in the likeness of the veterans of the Grand Army; Fanny Essler's visit; the cradle of the little Roi de Rome; the objects of popular devotion which the interminable and indestructible Flambeau produces from his vast pockets—the handkerchief, the pipe, the egg-cup, and the platter, and all printed with their adoring Napoleonic legend—each one of these incidents is portrayed with an eloquence and a vivid realisation of stage effect which go far to blind our perception of the slow action of the piece which they embellish. As a contrast, observe the dramatic value, the authority of the invention, in the scene when Metternich holds up the mirror to the pale, convicted countenance of the son of Marie Thérèse. The mistakes of a sincere artist are never useless: they serve to educate those in sympathy with his finest aims.

A biblical vision; a fairy tale; a story of distant and poetic passion; a drama compact with magnanimity, with romantic courage and the gay courage of strength; and now this study of an historical bankruptcy and the tragedy of a conflicting temperament—such are the subjects M. Rostand has presented to us within the last six years. Essentially a romantic by temperament, it is his distinction that his treatment of his material is always classic treatment. He feels, and he obeys the rules. How far he has solved the great problem of writing plays alive and imbued with the literary spirit, which yet are primarily acting plays for us; remains to be seen. In France, and to the majority of those who have heard him in French, there is no question of it. But it is always difficult in the matter of a translation justly to award the reasons of failure. Hitherto it would seem in London that our public of the theatres is not prepared for anything but a deeper insistence upon old and limited lines. Experiment it distrusts, and the gallant

adventures of the artistic temperament find it indifferent and leave it irresponsive, if not objecting.

It was Louis Stevenson who pointed out, long ago, how close a test of a man's or a people's artistic capability is the unprompted desire to try new issues and experiment in new material and new methods; and, remembering this, it is difficult to predict much that is hopeful for our contemporary English stage. That we shall continue to command an adequate supply of workmanlike and even commercially successful plays is inevitable. There is too much talent, and too business-like a talent, profitably occupied with stage matters to leave this for a moment in doubt.

But is the English drama destined to pass altogether from an art to a craft? Are we content to aim for dexterity rather than for perfection?

Conventionality kills art as inevitably as a noble convention protects it. It is in remembering this that we should feel most gratitude to writers like M. Edmond Rostand.

- ART. III.—1. *A History of Italian Unity: being a Political History of Italy from 1814 to 1871.* By BOLTON KING, M.A. 2 vols. London, James Nisbet & Co.: 1899.
2. *The Union of Italy, 1815–1895.* By W. J. STILLMAN. Cambridge, University Press: 1898.
3. *Marco Minghetti: La Convenzione di Settembre.* Bologna, Zanichelli: 1899.
4. *Politica segreta Italiana: 1863–1870.* 2<sup>a</sup> edizione. Torino: 1891.
5. *Un po' più di Luce sugli Eventi politici e militari dell' Anno 1866.* Pel Generale ALFONSO LA MARMORA. 5<sup>a</sup> edizione. Firenze, Barbèra: 1873.

IN the April number of this Review we have travelled with Mr. King through the earlier stages of the Italian struggle for independence. We shall not attempt to accompany him during the ten years that followed 1849—years of reaction, but of concentration, marked by the rise and leadership of Cavour, the growth of the moderate party, the utter decadence of the Bourbons, and the final establishment of the hegemony of Piedmont. We shall not follow him through the war of 1859, the union of the centre with Piedmont, Garibaldi's brilliant enterprise, and the collapse of the Neapolitan monarchy, unparalleled in history since the days of Cortes and Pizarro. The first Italian parliament met at Turin on February 18, 1861; on June 6 Cavour died. Ten years more were to pass, before the unity so fortunately won could be completed by the inclusion of Venetia and Rome within the limits of the new kingdom.

The story of these years is less familiar to Englishmen than that of the more stirring time which preceded them. It is told with great fidelity and some minuteness by Mr. King, who must have devoted considerable labour to his exhaustive and conscientious consultation of many scattered sources of information. Signor Minghetti's posthumous volume on the September Convention is the only publication of any importance that has appeared since Mr. King's history, and it does not add very much to what was known before. Our author acquiesces too easily in some of the partisan judgements of republican writers, although his general tone is eminently judicial and by no means over-favourable to the so-called party of action during the years after

Cavour's death. They were years of fatal, almost tragic, conflict between the natural and honourable impatience of all patriotic Italians to finish the work so well begun, and the really pressing need for peace after the storm, for order, for economy, for internal organisation of the hurriedly constructed fabric. The rapidity with which events had moved during the two critical years of 1859 and 1860 was a bad preparation for a policy of patience, of quiet inward developement, of retrenchment and reform. The comparative neglect of social and economic questions sowed the seeds of many of the ills from which Italy now acutely suffers. Over-haste to solve the more exciting problems of Rome and Venice involved the country in financial disaster, in occasional grave national peril, and in considerable loss of dignity.

As far as the statesmen who successively took up Cavour's work are concerned, we may say, without undue belittlement, that they never were the masters, but always the slaves of circumstance; always wrestling, but, with one exception, wrestling honourably with problems that were beyond their skill. The King was not always an assistance. Party politics were growing increasingly bitter and factious. All parties were in fault. The moderates were pedantic and unsympathetic. Radicals, who were nothing if not patriotic, were hot-headed and rash to craziness, unjustly suspicious of all men, from the King downwards, who were not of their own number, and fanatically hostile to Napoleon III., with whom the rulers of Italy had to reckon, whether they liked it or not. National aspirations could not be satisfied so long as Venice and Rome remained outside the legal boundary of the kingdom. Historical sentiment and political necessity concurred in giving the foremost place to Rome. 'Im-  
'portunate memories of the past greatness' of the Eternal City, and belief in her perennial mission, dazzled the Italian imagination. 'Without Rome Italy is nothing,' said Ricasoli; 'for Venice we must wait.' The Papal territory caused an interruption of the continuity of the State, which must be a permanent obstacle to any thorough welding of South with North. The French occupation chafed the nation's pride, and might at any moment be used as a fulcrum for a larger foreign intervention in Italian affairs.

One of the earliest acts of the first parliament was to pass an unanimous resolution that Rome must be the capital of United Italy. But, with the French garrison in the way, 'the Roman question could not be solved by the sword,' as

Cavour told the Chamber. There were only two ways out of the difficulty: to win the consent of the Papacy itself and go to Rome with the approval of Catholic sentiment, or to induce the Emperor to withdraw his troops, and then wait till events should afford an opportunity and an excuse for action. The first way was the better, and was followed by Cavour, until he found it absolutely barred by irreconcilable and, to our notions, short-sighted clerical obstinacy. The great statesman's hope was to convince Catholics that the abolition of the Temporal Power would lead to the complete spiritual independence of the Church. The key-note of his policy was his well-known saying, 'A free Church in a free State.'

'His daring conception,' says Mr. King, 'was no less than an absolute reversal of the maxim which had guided the governments of Catholic Europe. It had been their policy from mediæval times to bind the Church with concordats and laws, which limited the Pope's authority, which made the clergy more or less dependent on the government, which gave the Catholic profession the dignity and emoluments of a State Church, but made it pay dearly by the surrender of its liberty. All this Cavour proposed to sweep away, if the Papacy would surrender its Temporal Power. . . . Subject to the general law of the land, the Church would be absolutely free in the enjoyment and control of its property, and the State would guarantee it a certain income. The Pope might exercise canonic discipline without let, provided he did not call in the aid of the civil arm, might hold synods and correspond with bishops. The clergy might preach and teach what they pleased in their own schools and seminaries. The State would surrender its right to nominate bishops, who in future would be elected by the clergy of the diocese. The Pope would retain the nominal title of Sovereign, with ample endowment for himself and his court. The Conclave would be absolutely free from governmental influences.'

There lay across the path not only the highly strung sentiment and cherished ideals of Catholicism, but also the very material interests of clerical selfishness and ambition. One set of obstacles might be removed by the freshness and largeness of the new policy, which appealed to the imagination and had already won the support of the reforming clergy, at that moment a far more numerous and influential body than they ever have been since. But to overcome vulgarer motives required an appeal to self-interest. It was necessary to win over the Curia. Accordingly, to the Cardinals were to be given the privileges of royal princes and seats in the Senate. The more liberal of them were unofficially approached through Father Passaglia, the

reforming Jesuit, and Dr. Diomede Pantaleoni, a well-known Roman Liberal, whilst others were allowed to make overtures more directly to Antonelli himself, the most influential, as well as the shrewdest and most dangerous, if the least bigoted, member of the Curia. At one moment his support appeared to have been won. According to Mr. King 'there is strong evidence that he was offered and did not refuse a 'mighty bribe.' That Antonelli's presumed sense of self-interest was taken into consideration as an element of likely success is no doubt the case. But we do not feel satisfied that any of the published evidence amounts to proof that a concrete offer was made and accepted. Of course Antonelli denied anything of the sort. The letters of Cavour relating to this affair in the collection edited by Chiala have unfortunately been mutilated or expurgated. Some hitch or other occurred about the end of February, when Antonelli broke off all negotiations. On March 21 Pantaleoni was expelled from Rome. Father Passaglia, writing to Cavour, attributed this 'recrudescence of violence' on the Papal side to the influence of the King and Queen of Naples, who had arrived in Rome after the fall of Gaeta about the middle of February.

After this rebuff had proved the impossibility of conciliating the Papacy, Cavour turned to the second alternative. The last weeks of his life were occupied in negotiations with Napoleon III. for the departure of the French troops. About the middle of April the Emperor's views were unofficially communicated in a letter from Prince Jérôme Bonaparte. The principle of non-intervention was to form the logical basis of the arrangement. The Pope being treated as an independent Sovereign, no power whatever, neither France, nor Austria, nor the new Italy might interfere in his States. This meant practically that France would evacuate Rome in return for an Italian undertaking not to attack Papal territory, and, indeed, to prevent by force any attempted attack on it from without. But, to quote Prince Jérôme :—

'If in time the relations of the Papal government to the 500,000 or 600,000 subjects who remain for it to govern should become insupportable, the government of the Emperor may not consider itself obliged to guarantee the Pope against his own subjects. . . . If Rome is one day to become the capital of Italy, this must be brought about, not by means of conquest from without, but through the manifest and persevering will of its own inhabitants, and the impotence of the government of the priests.'



Cavour consulted no one but Ricasoli, Minghetti, and the King. All were favourable, and a letter of acceptance was sent back to Paris. But the discussion of the date to be fixed for evacuation caused some little delay, and Cavour's days were numbered. Nothing had been settled when he breathed his last on June 16. When an attempt was made by his successor to continue the negotiations the Emperor drew back, and so the matter dropped for the time. In fact Ricasoli was personally obnoxious to the Emperor as well as to the clericals, and despite his honest efforts no real progress was made with the Roman question during his administration.

In the spring of 1862 intrigue drove this statesman from office, to make way for Urbano Rattazzi, the evil genius of his country and his king. 'He believes neither in God nor in devil, and knows not the very meaning of "principle,"' are Mazzini's words of him. These expressions may seem harsh to apply to a man who was uncorrupt in public and blameless in private life, and whose genuine courtesy and gentle winning manners never made an unnecessary enemy. But to his versatility and parliamentary cleverness there corresponded no constructive ability, no vigour in action or decision in difficulty. Accident rather than conviction had thrown Rattazzi into an opposition to Cavour, which naturally led to the leadership of the Left in the Chamber; but he formed no party of adherents, he developed no policy, he inspired no opinions. His desire to please made him acceptable at Court, where his helpfulness in the King's private difficulties was much preferred to La Marmora's scoldings. Unfortunately the same quality led to a yielding acquiescence in the rash schemes of the party of action, whose enthusiasms he did not really share. 'Personal ambitions,' says Mr. King, 'sheer love of caballing, a courtier's deference to the King, weighed more with this man of little ideas and little intrigues, and urged him to strange ventures, and a game whose winning meant dishonour.'

Under Rattazzi the Roman question entered on a more dangerous phase. He had neither the wisdom nor the strength of will to curb the impatience of the forward party, whilst he lacked the courage to throw himself along with them into a rash but noble policy of open attack upon Venetia or Rome, in defiance of the Emperors and their armies. His relations with the men of action had long been intimate, and he probably fancied that he could profit

by their aggressiveness and yet evade responsibility. But the game of 1860 could not be played again, not even had a Cavour been there to play it. Within six months of taking office Rattazzi had risked the loss of the newly-won independence by his rash connivance with Garibaldi's raid on Rome, and at the same time jeopardised the popularity of the monarchy by wounding and arresting the old hero, when the expedition was stopped by the royal troops on the heights of Aspromonte.

The secret history of this affair, as well as of all the relations between Rattazzi, Garibaldi, and the King, is very obscure. Mr. Stillman, after remarking that it will possibly never be known, expresses his preference for the hypothesis 'that Garibaldi was in secret agreement with the King, if not with Rattazzi, and that the expedition had the distinct assent of the King; but that after it was fairly embarked the Emperor of the French suddenly came forward with an imperious demand on the Italian Government to stop Garibaldi on his way.'

In a posthumous volume, published last year, Signor Minghetti writes :—

'Here we should relate, what history has not yet revealed, how Garibaldi in accord with the King and with Rattazzi designed an expedition to Greece in order to carry revolution into the Danubian provinces still subject to Turkey; how England skilfully thwarted the plan, through the instrumentality of Sir James Hudson, who was summering on the Lago Maggiore; how Garibaldi was left free by the Italian Government to organise volunteers in Sicily, as it was still supposed that he had the eastern expedition in view; how then all of a sudden he turned his arms on Rome; in what manner Rattazzi, overwhelmed by this change, tried to ward off the blow; and how, at length, he resisted Garibaldi and defeated him at Aspromonte. All this forms a very curious episode of the time, but this is not the place to tell it.'

This allusion indicates a view somewhat more favourable to the straightforwardness of Rattazzi, but not flattering to his acuteness.

Meanwhile the Emperor had again turned his mind to the withdrawal of his troops, for which he was genuinely anxious. This time he felt his way at Rome with proposals including a French guarantee of the territorial *status quo*, to be further confirmed by the signatories of the Treaty of Vienna, the assumption by Italy of nearly the whole of the pontifical debt, and, on the Pope's side, the concession of administrative reforms and liberties. These terms were

obviously very unfavourable to Italy, and could hardly have been accepted by any Government at Turin. Fortunately they were rejected by the Papal Court in language so uncompromising that, in other circumstances, it might have led to almost unconditional evacuation. But Aspromonte had supervened, with its awkward consequences.

The repression of the Garibaldian attempt caused Rattazzi's Government to feel confused and shamefaced before public opinion, which suspected it of having acted under foreign dictation, and not on its own convictions. To neutralise these suspicions, and rehabilitate the Ministry in public esteem, General Durando, who held the portfolio for foreign affairs, penned an injudicious note to France and a violent circular to the Italian Legation.

'All Italy demanded its capital. The problem remained as it had been formulated by Garibaldi, and its solution was urgent. The state of things was insupportable, and would drive the Government to extreme measures, the consequences of which would not fall on Italy alone, but might compromise the interests of the Catholic world and the peace of Europe.'

The impression made in Paris was very bad, and was not much modified by a somewhat milder note to France on October 8. The Catholic party there gained the ascendent. On the 15th Thouvenel was replaced at the foreign office by 'Drouyn de Lhuys, who was no friend to Italy. The 26th brought a very sharp reply from him:—

'After referring to the repression of Garibaldi's attempt, General Durando appropriates his programme, and, affirming the right of Italy to Rome, claims in the name of his Government that this capital shall be handed over, and the Holy Father dispossessed. In the presence of this solemn affirmation and peremptory demand, any discussion seems to me useless, and any attempt at compromise illusory.'

When the Chamber met again in November, Left and Right joined in attacking the discredited Cabinet. On December 1 Rattazzi resigned, and was succeeded by Farini, whose health soon broke down. His place was taken by Minghetti in the following March, with Pasolini, and subsequently Visconti Venosta, at the foreign office. Pisanelli, Peruzzi, Amari, Mauna, Spaventa, Ricci, Della Rovere and Menabrea were his other colleagues. None of them were Piedmontese, except Della Rovere, and, in a sense, Menabrea, who was a Savoyard. It was impossible for any Ministry to invite another rebuff from Drouyn de Lhuys, and the question of the French occupation now remained dormant till the spring

of 1864, when it was revived by alarming reports of Pius IX.'s health. His end was supposed to be imminent. La Marmora wrote, from his command in the Neapolitan provinces, to ask what course he was to take should the Pope die. Minghetti approached Rouher, the French Minister of State, who was known to be more favourably disposed than Drouyn, and received an encouraging reply. This was in the middle of April. A few days later Count Pepoli, the Italian minister at the Court of St. Petersburg, was passing through Paris. Now Pepoli, besides being a Bolognese, and consequently a fellow-countryman of Minghetti's, was a grandson of Murat's and a relation of the Emperor, who took occasion of his presence to ask for a memorandum on the Roman question. Pepoli referred to Minghetti, and the result was Visconti Venosta's despatch of May 29, calling the Emperor's attention to the eventuality of the Pope's death, and the importance of arriving at some agreement before that occurrence. Drouyn de Lhuys replied stiffly, after his usual manner, so Pepoli was authorised to return to Paris and again see the Emperor personally. This he did at Fontainebleau in company with Nigra; who describes the interview in a despatch, some passages of which we shall quote:—

'After Pepoli and Nigra had pointed out the difficulties which might arise on the Pope's death, the Emperor replied, protesting that he had, and had always had, a lively desire to withdraw the French garrison from Rome, but that he could not do so, unless he were certain that the withdrawal of the troops would not have, as its necessary and immediate consequence, the fall of the temporal power. "If Italy pledges herself," he said, "to respect and make others respect the pontifical territory, I have no reason to doubt that the King's Government will keep the pledge; but will this conviction find its way into the minds of the masses of the Catholics? There exists a resolution of the Italian Parliament which proclaims Rome as the capital; if I sign the treaty that you propose, people will cry out that it is a farce. Everyone believes that the Italian Government is only keeping its seat at Turin until it is able to remove it to Rome. To generate in Catholic opinion the conviction that the Italian Government will keep a promise of not attacking, and not allowing an attack upon, the Papal States, it would be necessary that you should offer a practical guarantee, which would demonstrate that the treaty is not a make-believe." To these words Pepoli replied that he knew that the Government of the King, independently of the question now under discussion, and for reasons of internal administration, had the intention of proposing to H.M. the Emperor the removal of the capital from Turin to some other city of Italy, and asked whether this change would not constitute in the eyes of the Emperor such a guarantee as he was looking for.

H.M., after a few seconds' reflection, said that if this change were to take place, it seemed to him of such a nature as to attain the end in view, and to generate that confidence of which he had spoken, and added that that being established, he would have no difficulty in signing the treaty.'

Had or had not Pepoli been authorised to make this suggestion? Or did it really originate with the Emperor? It is not clear. Perhaps some day Signor Visconti Venosta may explain. At any rate the idea was not new. More than a year before General Cialdini had written a memorandum for the then Minister of War recommending the removal of the capital from Turin on military grounds:—

'The cession of Nice and Savoy and the new delimitation of our frontiers on the side of France do not permit the capital of the kingdom to remain any longer at Turin, on which city 200,000 Frenchmen could descend in a few marches by several roads. The capital of Italy, if it were not to be Rome, should certainly be Florence or Naples.'

The rest of Italy, particularly the south, grumbled at the preponderance of Piedmont, and disliked the flood of Piedmontese employés, with their bureaucratic pedantry and uncouth speech. Rattazzi was said to have promised the Neapolitans, when on a visit to their city, that Naples should become the capital. Now that there was a Ministry from which Piedmontese were so conspicuously absent, there seemed to be greater chances of a removal. Had not Peruzzi, fishing for his beloved Florence, declared in the Chamber, in Rattazzi's time, that Italy could not be governed from Turin? Even Mordini the Radical—no moderate he—had quite recently argued for the change in order to 'Italianise' the administration. But we have Minghetti's own evidence that the transfer had not been actually decided upon already. 'Had that been so, all appearance of pressure on the part of France would be removed.'

La Marmora was at once taken into confidence, and informed of the momentous interview at Fontainebleau, but without being in the first instance told distinctly that the removal of the capital was to be the guarantee. He read between the lines and guessed it for himself. Here is his characteristic reply:—

'Naples: 12th July.

'Dear President,—I thank you for your long and interesting letter. On the Roman question allow me to express to you at once my intimate conviction that it does not suit us in any way to enter into treaty

with the French Government on the base of the Cavour plan, which the Emperor favours. What? Is the Italian Government to pledge itself not to attack, and not to allow others to attack, the Papal territory? On those conditions I prefer a thousand times that the French should remain, for, if we accepted them, we should find ourselves face to face with this tremendous dilemma: either to fail to keep our engagement, and in that case we should have against us, not only the whole of France, but many other powers, and the certainty of having the French at Rome, never to go away again; or else to protect, at our expense, and with our blood, our bitterest enemies within the walls of that very Rome that has been proclaimed by Parliament the capital of the kingdom. I do not believe that any Ministry could be found that would be capable of governing under the weight of such odium. And whatever can be the *acte* which the Emperor is cogitating, to give this lovely project a "character of seriousness"? To my mind it can be none other than the transfer of the capital, either to Florence or to some other city. But to do that, should we find it necessary, I do not see that we need obtain the permission of France. . . . For heaven's sake, do not let yourselves be cajoled by the pleasure of seeing the French leave Rome on such terms as these. The announcement of the evacuation might awaken among Italians a momentary sense of general satisfaction; but as soon as the conditions became known, there would arise, I am certain, a squall so tremendous that it might swallow up both governors and governed.'

The writer was a true prophet. It is remarkable that, although himself a Piedmontese, his disapproval was not grounded on the desertion of Turin, but on what seemed to him the practical impossibility of loyally guarding the Papal frontier. But in spite of his disagreement, he recognised the patriotic intentions of the Ministry so thoroughly, that later he even went to Paris himself, to see whether his personal influence with the Emperor could obtain some improvement of the terms. Of course he would not accept the place that was ready for him in the Cabinet.

After La Marmora's warning the authors of the policy could hardly have remained blind to the dangers ahead. Visconti at any rate realised them. He wrote to Nigra:—

'The proposal, it is true, has the advantage of not imposing upon us any essential concession on the national programme. But it does in fact impose on us a grave crisis for the country. . . . To judge of the extent of the danger, should the Piedmontese element become disaffected to the new order of things, it suffices to consider the importance of that element, the prevalence, whatever may be said about it, of its influence in the mechanism of government, its importance in the army, the solid cement which it supplies for the new building. This is the difficulty, this the problem. Yet, as this is the condition "*sine qua non*," as it means that we should obtain the French

evacuation of Rome. . . that in Italy there would remain only one stranger instead of two, it is, I think, difficult for any patriotic Italian to refuse the proposals.'

The project was in fact approved, and approved warmly by Nino Bixio, by Cialdini, by Ricasoli himself, who wrote from Brolio on September 13 :—

'The confidential disclosures previously received from you had prepared me for this happy solution, but that has not diminished my inward joy at the announcement that the treaty has been concluded. This is an immense event for Italy. It is, in short, the beginning of her completion, and will have great consequences, at home and abroad. The treaty is the real act of recognition of the new Italy. . . . As to the condition of transferring the capital, I will say nothing, considering that it is imposed, and indeed is a means to the main treaty. After all, it will not be without its utility.'

The really dramatic figure in this affair was Victor Emmanuel. Minghetti has been charged with duplicity in not instantly communicating the proposals to him. But in justice we must remember that the quixotic La Marmora himself advised ministers not to refer the arrangement to the King until its terms were clearly defined. At last the Prime Minister spoke to his Sovereign on the morning of August 13.

'I read the articles, which he fully approved, and when I came to define the "act which might be considered as a guarantee," \* I uttered the words, "Transfer of the Capital." The King was startled by them. "And why?" said he. "What is the connexion between these two things?" "Sir," I said, "the Emperor wants to tell the Catholics: 'I have not evacuated Rome without securing the Pope against aggression by the Italians,' but the promise to respect the Papal frontier would be rendered of no effect by their impatience of remaining long at Turin. This impatience would drive them to cross the frontier. If they transfer their capital elsewhere, the mere transfer gives breathing time. You do not change a capital as you do a coat. And if, as the result of new events, Italy is to go to Rome, such an interval will have elapsed as will save France from any appearance of complicity." The King kept silence; then replied proudly: "If the capital is to be changed, I shall do it at my own good pleasure, and of my own free will. I do not choose to have it imposed upon me."

"Your Majesty," I replied, "what imposes it is not the foreigner, but the sentiment of Italians. Pepoli said at Paris that it was a matter already determined on by the Italian Government. That is not true; nothing could be decided without the exercise of your Majesty's will, but the idea of transferring the capital elsewhere is in the minds of many, of many more than is apparent."

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\* This was the Emperor's phrase.

"But what will Turin say? Is it not unworthy to reward her for so many sacrifices, by a sacrifice yet more cruel?"

"Your Majesty, if the sacrifice which is asked of her had for its motive internal dissensions or discontent, it would be truly terrible. But it loses much of its burdensomeness when it serves so weighty a result as the withdrawal of the French from Rome. It is a means to the salvation of the country.

"I cannot reconcile myself to this idea," said the King. And I, "If your Majesty saw into my mind, you would know how painful it is to me too to abandon this city, so well conducted, so devoted to the dynasty, that has deserved so well of Italy."

"Then the King, striking his fist violently on the table, exclaimed: "And what matters Turin to you and yours? It is I whose heart is torn by it: I who have always lived here, who have here all my memories of childhood, all my habits, all my affections."

'The King was walking excitedly up and down the room, and his eyes were full of tears.'

He then calmed down, and sent for Pepoli, to hear from his own lips every word of what had passed at Paris. After seeing Pepoli the King gradually came round to the acceptance of the obnoxious clause, as well as the body of the agreement, though he first sent Menabrea with a personal letter to the Emperor. Victor Emmanuel felt no resentment against Minghetti, whom he liked personally. On September 4 he wrote to him on the occasion of his marriage:—

'Dear Minghetti,—Thanks for your letter and your news. My faith is waning a little; perhaps it is the effect of the heavy snow which is falling to-day at this wild shooting-camp. My dear friend, I renew my cordial and sincere good wishes for your marriage, begging you to kiss your bride's hand for me. With a grip of your hand, I am with all my heart, and ever shall be, your most affectionate,

'VICTOR EMMANUEL.'

The treaty was actually signed on September 15. To its main provisions in five articles was appended a secret protocol declaring that the convention should have no executory value until the King of Italy had decreed the transfer of the capital. This transfer was to take place within six months from the date of the convention. The French were to complete the evacuation within two years.

There can be little doubt that the condition was embodied in a separate and secret protocol at Minghetti's desire; he probably thought that if it were concealed the treaty would be well received everywhere except in Piedmont, whereas if published the sense of foreign pressure would raise a general storm. It was an unwise attempt. It



savoured of that duplicity which hangs about all secret treaties, and too many people had been taken into confidence for any possibility of the secret being kept. Mazzini in some letters of the month of July hints that he knew what was going on, 'but without being sure whether it was the 'work of the King' or of the Ministry.' It seems to us extremely unlikely that he knew of the undertaking to leave Turin, or else he would undoubtedly have upset the coach by publication. His manifesto on the subject, which is of course violently hostile to the convention, was not issued till September 24, when the riots at Turin were already over and everyone knew the facts.

When the treaty was signed it was still unsettled where the future capital should be. Naples and Florence both had their claims. Political reasons were in favour of Naples. Disaffection and brigandage would have taken flight before the advent of the central administration, and the prosperity which a capital brings with it. Florence had the advantage of its central position, its pure and unadulterated Italian traditions, and, above all, its favourable strategical situation in case of invasion. On this the military experts laid great stress. In Florence the public offices would find surroundings more favourable to the incorruptible performance of their duties than in Naples, but the atmosphere of either city would in that respect be a deplorable falling off from the austere public spirit of Turin. The really decisive argument for Florence was adduced by the common-sense of the King. 'If once we establish ourselves at Naples,' he said, 'we shall find it much more difficult to get away from it than we should from Florence.'

The alienation of Piedmont, which Visconti had foreseen, was intensely aggravated and embittered by the mismanagement that allowed a natural and healthy demonstration of dissatisfaction to develop into a riot, which was then suppressed with bloodshed. The Turin 'massacre' was not a necessary consequence of the policy of the Ministry, but it was one that no Ministry could survive. The King sent for La Marmora, whose Piedmontese birth and authoritative character pointed him out as the right man. Although the new Premier had not welcomed the convention, he saw that it must now be accepted and executed. But he submitted both convention and protocol to the Chamber, which ratified them by 305 votes to 63. This large majority, and the disgust of the Clericals, on whom the convention fell as a bolt from the blue, prove that the general sense of the

country did not regard it as in any sense an abandonment of the claims upon Rome.

The debate is of historic interest. It was the occasion of a great speech of Crispi's, condemning alike the convention and the factiousness that sought to profit by the opportunity for an attack on the Monarchy. 'I have no other flag than "One Italy, with Victor Emmanuel." Those who accept a different banner do not desire unity. The Monarchy unites us, the Republic would divide us.' This declaration marked Crispi's formal separation from the Republicans and from Mazzini, who denounced him as an opportunist and a renegade in a letter couched in language of magnificent eloquence. But it is the eloquence of the seer; and we try out with Hosea, 'The prophet is a fool, the man that hath the spirit is mad.'

Crispi replied with less magniloquence, but with considerable force, in a long epistle that concluded with the words: 'Restore calm to your troubled soul; trust in the strength of the country; enlighten the people without exciting them.' But Mazzini was possessed with the delusion that the Moderates and the Monarchy were deliberately refusing to complete Italy, for fear of stimulating democratic ideas.

'But what if the Monarchy did *not* choose? What if, foreseeing in war with Austria a series of national insurrections like those of 1818, with consequences probably fatal to the interests of the dynasty, it were deliberately to draw back from the Venetian enterprise? What if, cowed by the potent name of Rome, or at any rate with the presentiment that, after the solution of the national question, the men of Italy would pour all the fulness of their young life into the question of liberty, it chose to hold itself aloof from the ever-Republican Capitol, afar from the walls that are stamped with the memories of 1849?'

Distracted by these suspicions, he announced in the following month of March that there existed a further secret protocol to the convention, in which Italy undertook to abstain from any enterprise against Venetia as well as against Rome, and, moreover, that if, through unforeseen circumstances, she were to acquire either of those coveted objects, she would agree to a rectification of her frontier with France, and cede Piedmont up to the line of the Sesia! Diamilla-Müller relates how, as far back as October 2, a certain Colonel Manari declared that he had seen at least, the outside of the actual document—a roll tied up with blue silk—lying in the drawer of a high official of the foreign

office with whom he was acquainted, and who had communicated to him the nature of its contents. Whether the story was a mere hoax, or a mischievous attempt to exasperate the Piedmontese into some revolutionary outbreak; whether it originated with the colonel, or with the clerk, or was concocted between them, does not appear to be known. The very possibility that such nonsense could be seriously believed, and that the emphatic denials of La Marmora and Visconti should not have shaken the belief of those who half wished it to be true, only proves how excited and hysterical the opposition had become.

After all the convention was not a political crime, any more than it was a diplomatic triumph. Its authors imagined that they were merely following in the footsteps of Cavour. They prided themselves on being that great man's disciples in a very special and intimate sense. They forgot that the times had changed. Without Cavour's exceptional diplomatic ability, without his ascendancy over the mind of Napoleon III., without the glamour and enthusiasm of the two great years of Italian liberation, they had new difficulties to overcome. At home parties and politicians were far more estranged and embittered. The increasing obstinacy of the Ultramontanes, and their increasing influence at the French as well as at the Papal Court, had to be reckoned with. Above all, the fatal day of Aspromonte, and all that led up to it, had not only immensely increased the difficulty of restraining the men of action, but had made that difficulty so patent to all men that Napoleon III., as he said, would have been acting a farce had he not demanded guarantees. In 1861 the change of capital would not have been asked for, nor can we believe that Cavour would have consented to it.

The excitement and suspicious impatience of the forwards made it almost hopeless for the convention to be carried out in the sense in which both the Emperor and the Italian Ministry understood it; that is to say, prevention of all raids, in the full expectation that either the Pope would be unable to govern his own subjects, in which case Europe must recognise the absolute necessity of Italian intervention, or that with a more liberal Pontiff—and we must remember that Pius IX. was supposed to be at death's door—some *modus vivendi* would be arrived at which would make Rome the capital with the consent of the Head of the Church.

On the other hand, there seemed to be no alternative but absolute inactivity or the wild-cat schemes of the Reds,

which must infallibly have led to the defeat and destruction of the new Italy. The arguments for the aggressive policy were all vitiated by the assumption that Italy, were she only bold enough, had the strength to defy Austria and France at once. That bubble was pricked once for all by the campaign of 1866. Its absurdity needs no demonstration at this time of day.

We must not judge of the policy of the convention in the full light of subsequent events. No one could foresee that in less than seven years France would be forced to retire by other causes, and that Austria, with a Liberal Chamber and a Protestant Premier, would have neither the power nor the will to interfere. No one could foresee that within four months from the actual withdrawal of the French, in December 1866, Rattazzi would again be in power, with his fatal facility for mischief. Mentana and Sedan made the convention obsolete. As things turned out it neither hastened nor retarded the completion of Italy. Its only practical results were the temporary sojourn of the capital at Florence, which proved a curse to that city, the accentuation of internal faction, and the unnatural alliance of the Piedmontese deputies with the Republicans, which has left its trace to this day in the irreconcilable socialism of the city of Turin.

Space forbids our dealing with the internal policy of the Minghetti Cabinet, 'moderato puro, non più piemontese ma italiano.' But we must point out that Mr. King loses his usual balance of judgement when he speaks of them:—

'Financial mismanagement, administrative chaos, national humiliation, make the record of this mediocre man, with his moderately good intentions, his moderately high principles, his moderate capacity, his absolute feebleness in execution. . . . Ricasoli and Rattazzi (!) had had some vision of their country's needs, some sense of what national dignity required. After them the Government passed into the trivial hands of men without courage or capacity, men of the small ideal and tortuous compromise, whose want of principle and energy allowed the country to drift into even deeper waters abroad and at home.'

When he wrote those words our author must have forgotten his sharp but sound sentence on Rattazzi, which we have already quoted. He has, and rightly, a very high opinion of Ricasoli. 'Proud, fearless, and self-reliant . . . with a zeal for morality as keen as any devotee's . . . his courage and firmness, his broad-mindedness and stainless integrity, pointed him out as a man made for crises.' This portraiture is out of drawing somewhere. The light is too bright, or

the shadow is too dark. Mr. King's Ricasoli could never have written to *his* Minghetti the letter of congratulation on the convention that we have already quoted.

We grant Minghetti's want of energy, we grant the mediocrity—few statesmen in Italy, or out of it, rise above the level of mediocrity—but we traverse the 'trivial;' we traverse the 'small ideal;' we emphatically deny the 'want of principle' and the innuendo of the 'tortuous.'

The exaggerated depreciation seems to spring partly from repugnance for the September Convention, partly from prejudice against the Moderates. Liberal-Conservatism never appeals to the imagination unless it finds a leader of exceptionally attractive or commanding personality. The Moderates were never popular. The majority of Italians were, and are, extremists, Radicals or Reactionaries, Clericals or Republicans, Reds or Blacks. The special circumstances of Italy which led to the Radicals being the war party further damaged the Moderates in popular estimation. They were by far the best informed of Italians, and consequently took more account than others of forces beyond their own borders. They always seemed to be truckling to the French Emperor, who happened to be the *bête noire* of the Reds, partly because sundry of their leaders had fallen foul of him in their exile, partly for reasons which do not belong to the history of Italy. The Moderates were the only party that inspired confidence abroad; they seemed to be enjoying more than their share of power, and enjoying it in consequence of their acceptability to the foreigner, not in virtue of any love for them at home. But it was courage, not cowardice, that made them take account of unwelcome forces and look facts in the face; strength, not weakness, that led to their repression of the hotter spirits of the forward party. We can discover neither cowardice nor want of principle in the adoption of a policy with regard to Rome and the change of capital which they knew must bring down on their heads the bitterest taunts and the vilest accusations, solely because they believed it—wrongly perhaps—to be the right policy and the best for their fatherland. The negotiations for the convention had thrown into the background the Venetian question, which during the past twelve months had given occasion for some very curious secret communications between Victor Emmanuel and Mazzini, with a view to the organisation of insurrection in Venetia and the Italian Tyrol.

These have been related by Diamilla-Müller in a volume

entitled '*Politica segreta Italiana.*' Doubts have been expressed as to the genuineness of his revelations, but these are now confirmed by Minghetti; with this difference, that the King did not keep his political intrigues hidden from the Premier, but in fact submitted to him all the notes and memoranda he received, and settled with him the replies to be sent. The tone of the Republican leader was dictatorial and suspicious at the same time. He was annoyed by a gossiping report that he had once given certain undertakings to Victor Emmanuel during a supposed interview at Naples, and that his not having kept his word was now causing the King to hesitate in making any arrangement with him. He wrote to one of his confidants:

'The King never saw me at Naples or anywhere else. Nor did I ever promise him anything.' And again: 'The person with whom you are in touch,' meaning Victor Emmanuel, 'has not a shadow of moral energy. He hangs upon every word of Louis Napoleon.' And on January 25, 1864: 'You must make him understand clearly the alternative: Venetia or else Republican plotting.'

The King handed to the intermediaries sundry memoranda for communication to Mazzini. One of them was jotted down by him in pencil, on the evening of February 28, whilst watching a new horse being broken in. It ran:—

'Pastore has quite misrepresented what I said. I never said that I had spoken to or made engagements with *that person*, nor that that person had made engagements with me. I only said that I had been friendly to him on various occasions, which perhaps he does not know himself; that I had not tormented him at Naples, but that he, on the contrary, had shown ingratitude in what he has written, both publicly and privately. I said that I could not allow his party to take the initiative in the events which are to happen, and that if such a thing should occur it would be repressed by force.

'I say now that that much being formally established, I am disposed to act in concert in the manner desired, but on the understanding that I myself and my Government assume, whenever there is a shadow of a possibility, the glorious mandate of the final making of our fatherland. I share the momentum, and the desire to be doing, with the person of whom I have spoken. I judge of things for myself, and with the greatest energy, and not by the timid impressions of others. But let the person know that the moment is grave, and must be weighed with a calm mind and a heart aglow; that I and all of us wish and ought to complete the great work in the shortest space of time; but woe to us all if we cannot execute it well, or if, abandoning ourselves to impetuous and untimely frenzy, we should meet with such disaster as would again plunge our country in its ancient misfortunes. The moment is not yet ripe; soon I hope God will aid our fatherland.

V. E.

Müller, the intermediary who received this note for transmission, remarks upon it: 'Of the two parties who were treating, the Republican and the King, it is the latter who cuts the best figure; in the reserves, the bargainings and the doubts of the former there is something shrewd and prudent that might almost be called deceitful.'

The transfer of the capital to Florence coincided with a movement of the centre of gravity of Italian ambitions. Venice became the first object, whilst Rome temporarily receded into the background. This was not merely a result of the September Convention. There were sound reasons of state for the change of course. The rescue of Venice was a policy which united all true Italians, whilst aggression on Rome divided them, causing prickings of conscience and hesitation among the many devotees of unity who were at the same time devotees of the Church. Moreover, it was a strategically sound policy. So long as Austria kept her hand on Venetia, and held the Quadrilateral, she was in a position of vantage for interference should Italy make a move on Rome. But if once the frontier were pushed back, the Italian defensive position would be much improved, and Austria less likely to undertake a serious campaign single-handed for an object that could no longer affect her material interests. This expectation was justified when she made no move in 1871.

Rome, in fact, united Austria and France in opposition to Italian desires. Venice meant at least the friendly neutrality of the Emperor Napoleon, and, moreover, owing to the course of German politics, opened the door to an alliance with Prussia.

Mr. King shows grasp of the facts and sound historical judgement in his chapter on the 'Winning of Venetia.' The corresponding pages of Mr. Stillman's book are inaccurate, inadequate to the importance of the events, and very unfair to the policy of Italy. He endorses the charges of treachery to their Northern ally which, after the military weakness of the young country had been revealed in the campaign, were trumped up against La Marmora and his colleagues. 'The outcome,' says he, 'of this combination of intrigue, incompetence and treachery was the half-hearted movement which resulted in the battle of Custozza, in which, owing to the incompetence of their chiefs, the Italians were defeated with grave loss.' We therefore welcome all the more gladly Mr. King's sturdy defence of the loyalty with which La Marmora, no less than Ricasoli, acted in a

very difficult position. He boldly flings back the aspersion in the teeth of the other party. It is of Prussian, not Italian, 'treachery' that he complains; of Bismarck's, not La Marmora's, 'disloyal part.'

Let us say at once that we do not consider there was any treachery on either side. Each party entered into the alliance for its own purposes. Italy cared no more for the reorganisation of Germany under Prussian hegemony than did Prussia for the completion of Italy. Each party stood in a totally different relationship to the Emperor of the French, whose action until the very last seemed likely to dominate the situation. Is it surprising that there were mutual misunderstandings and suspicions? 'At bottom,' says a French writer, 'the distrust was reciprocal. At Berlin they suspected the Italians of pursuing more than one object at a time, and the Italians feared that Prussia only wanted to make use of them to extort the cession of the duchies from the Court of Vienna.' The selection of intermediaries did not tend to confidence. Count Usedom, the Prussian Minister at Florence, was fond of going to the Radical opposition for his information, and failed to secure La Marmora's confidence, whilst General Govone, the special emissary to Berlin, was a complete stranger there.

It was at the beginning of August 1865, when the Italian foreign office had barely effected its removal to Florence, that the opening move was made from the Prussian side. Usedom, with telegrams from Bismarck in his hand, asked point blank what the behaviour of Italy would be in the not improbable case of a war breaking out between Prussia and Austria. The idea was not fresh to the mind of the Italian Premier, who at once replied that Italy could not commit herself to a declaration of her intentions for the mere purpose of providing Prussia with a diplomatic lever, but that serious and formal proposals would be taken into consideration. He added that his Government could not engage itself without knowing the intentions of the Emperor of the French.

Bismarck's object in making these advances was not only to obtain the assistance of the Italian army. He was also reckoning on the notoriously friendly disposition of Louis Napoleon towards Italy, whenever the Papal question was not involved, to secure the benevolent neutrality of France on much easier terms than he could otherwise obtain. On the other hand, the situation seemed peculiarly felicitous for Italy. In Nigra's words, 'The breach between the two



'German Powers is for us one of the most glad and happy events to which the good fortune of Italy could give birth, for it gives us the means of getting Venetia, and getting it *without the assistance of France.*' The irony of events was about to treat this expectation with little mercy.

It proved impossible at the moment to obtain a definite declaration from France, far less the written promise of absolute neutrality, which Prussia desired. Drouyn de Lhuys only replied in general terms, recommending the Italian Government not to commit itself, and hinting that a direct arrangement with Austria might possibly be arrived at. This was at a moment when the Convention of Gastein seemed to have made the chances of war remote. During the autumn La Marmora made some unofficial proposals for a purchase of Venetia, but Austria refused to sell. In October followed Bismarck's famous interview with the French Emperor at Biarritz. Passing through Paris on his homeward journey, he gave Nigra to understand that in spite of Gastein war was unavoidable, and expressed his confidence that France would not be hostile to Prussia, adding, 'If Italy did not exist we should have to invent her!'

So matters remained until, early in 1866, Bismarck invited La Marmora to send, in the greatest secrecy, a general officer to Berlin to try to come to some agreement. General Govone was accordingly sent early in March. His actual instructions have never been made public, but La Marmora asserted in 1873 that he had told Govone that if Prussia would conclude an *offensive and defensive* treaty he was ready to sign it. The words in italics are material.

At Govone's first interview with Bismarck on March 14 the Prussian statesman showed no intention of concluding an agreement on equal and reciprocal terms. Bismarck explained that his plan was to bring forward the question of reform in Germany, 'spiced with a German Parliament.' This would create such a hubbub as must lead to war with Austria. To keep the King, his master, up to the mark he needed to conclude at once a treaty with Italy. He desired that Italy should undertake to follow Prussia in the above plan, on the understanding that Prussia for her part would engage that the war should solve the Venetian question at the same time. When Govone explained that it would not suit Italy to enter into a convention on such terms as these, Bismarck suggested a simple treaty in general terms of friendship and perpetual *alliance*. Such a treaty, although

'devoid of any real political importance, or of any determinate object,' would nevertheless be of use to him 'to keep King William in the path of his own combinations.' Govone's own impression after this interview was that Bismarck did not mean business, but only wished to bind Italy in general terms in order to frighten Austria into a more accommodating spirit on German questions on the one hand, and on the other to prevent her securing Italian neutrality by an offer of the peaceful cession of Venetia. There followed nearly a fortnight of fencing, during which Bismarck pressed Italy to assume the offensive against Austria, but would not give a categorical answer to the question, 'Would you, in that case, engage yourselves by a formal treaty to do the same, not only as soon as possible afterwards, but the very next day?'

Count Barral, the Italian Minister at Berlin, was now assisting Govone in the negotiations. On March 27 he telegraphed to La Marmora: 'I am going to telegraph, as soon as possible, the complete text in six articles of the project of *offensive and defensive alliance*, which I have discussed this morning with Bismarck. . . .' About an hour later he sent another message containing the six articles, which ran as follows:—

1. 'There shall be friendship and alliance between their Majesties the King of Prussia and the King of Italy.

2. 'If the negotiations which His Prussian Majesty has recently opened with the other German Governments, in view of a reform of the Federal Constitution in conformity with the needs of the German nation, were to fall through, and His Prussian Majesty were to be put in the position of having to take up arms in order to make his proposition prevail, then His Italian Majesty, after Prussia has initiated hostilities, and as soon as he is informed thereof, shall, in virtue of the present treaty, declare war upon Austria and upon the German Governments which may have allied themselves with Austria against Prussia.

3. 'From that moment the war shall be carried on by their Majesties with all the forces which Providence has placed at their disposition, and neither Prussia nor Italy shall conclude peace or armistice without reciprocal consent.

4. 'Such consent shall not be refused when Austria shall have consented to cede to Italy the Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom, and to Prussia territories equivalent to that kingdom in population.

5. 'This treaty shall expire three months after its signature, if within the three months the contingency foreseen in the second article has not been realised; that is to say, if Prussia has not declared war on Austria.

6. 'If the Austrian fleet, which is in course of being armed, leaves

the Adriatic before the declaration of war, His Italian Majesty shall send sufficient vessels to the Baltic, which shall remain there, so as to be ready to unite with the Prussian fleet when hostilities break out.'

La Marmora replied the same day that he had formed a generally favourable impression of the proposed treaty, without remarking on the discrepancy between the *offensive and defensive alliance* of Barral's first telegram and the *friendship and alliance* of the second. He added, however, that he considered it necessary that the Trentino, or upper valley of the Adige, should be comprised in the territory to be ceded by Austria, as being within the natural limits of Italy. To this, however, Bismarck rejoined that, as the Trentino formed part of the Germanic Confederation, it was impossible to stipulate beforehand for its cession to Italy, but what could not be done before the war might perfectly well be effected during or after it, especially if at the same time an appeal were addressed to the populations. Thus the Trentino dropped out of the negotiation, and after some days' further delay the treaty was signed on April 8. Its terms remained secret in virtue of a separate protocol to that effect, and to this day have never been published in full. They seem, however, to have been identical with the six articles printed above. The third article only appeared officially in the *Staats-Anzeiger* of July 19, 1866, but for the rest we have to rely on La Marmora's later revelations; whence it transpires that the preamble ran as follows:—

'Their Majesties the King of Italy and the King of Prussia, animated by the same desire to consolidate the guarantees of general peace, and taking account of the needs and legitimate aspirations of their nations, have, in order to settle the articles of a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance, named as their plenipotentiaries,' &c. &c.

There had been a serious difficulty about the words 'offensive and defensive.' Govone writes on April 10:—

'Count Barral will doubtless tell your Excellency of the small incidents to which certain proposals of modifications gave rise, proposals made by Count Bismarck by the King's order. In the first place, in the first lines of the treaty they wanted to suppress the words *offensive, and defensive treaty of alliance*, and to say *treaty of alliance and friendship*. Count Barral insisted on the retention of the original version, which had been transmitted to Florence, and after making some difficulty the President of the Council gave way. Owing to this modification in the text the signing had to be delayed till half-past eight, in order to make out a clean copy.'

It has been supposed by well-informed parties that King William was not informed by his Minister of this concession

to the Italian negotiation. If this were true it might account for his subsequent strange view of his undertakings.

What we do not know is whether in the first article the words *friendship and alliance* were allowed to remain, or were altered to *offensive and defensive alliance* to agree with the preamble.

But war was not yet inevitable. There was a peace party. King William was reluctant. Negotiations for disarmament were proceeding, when a false report that the Italians were moving bodies of troops towards the Po led Austria to put the army in Venetia on a war footing. La Marmora, who was growing anxious lest the two German Powers should patch up their quarrel, and Italy's opportunity be lost, seized the excuse to mobilise, and announced his intention in a circular letter to the Italian representatives abroad bearing date April 27.

This step annoyed the neutral Powers. Napoleon, who had been advising Italy to keep quiet, took it very ill, saying to Nigra: 'It was indeed worth while asking my advice 'when you were going to do exactly the contrary of what I 'advised.' The tone the Emperor adopted was peculiarly awkward, when the Italians had been reckoning on French support if by any chance Austria should attack them, as it was an established part of French policy that the results of the campaign of 1859 must not be reversed. Now it looked as if Austria might attack. Would Prussia come to the rescue in virtue of the 'offensive and defensive' treaty? Govone put the question to Bismarck on May 2, and received for reply, 'The King does not attach that import to the 'treaty, and does not think the obligation to be reciprocal, 'according to the literal text.' To a suggestion that the stipulation of the treaty might be supplemented and complete reciprocity introduced in a military convention, Bismarck objected that 'the King would never sign a convention which might be a weapon in the hands of Italy, 'and a possible encouragement to bring things to such a 'pass as would oblige Prussia, in spite of herself, to take 'part in the war.' He added, however, that he should tender his own resignation if, in the case of an Austrian attack, Prussia did not come to the assistance of Italy.

This is the sum-total of the alleged Prussian treachery during these negotiations. How much it amounts to is a purely academical question, as hostilities eventually broke out first between the German Powers, and we might never have heard of it but for the counter-accusation brought by

Bismarck, with considerable brutality of language, at a later date, and the disingenuous reference to these negotiations in the official Prussian history of the campaign of 1866. Here is the passage:—

‘War between the two German Powers offered to King Victor Emmanuel the opportunity which he could not well let slip if he wished ever to make good his claims to Venetia. Prussia, indeed, naturally wished that Italy should be prepared to act in case of war against such a formidable enemy as Austria, but could not expect that she would arm only in the case of an eventuality. The Cabinet of Florence must naturally, in its own interest, be assured that the armies of both States were at the same time prepared for war. To this Prussia could fix no given period, because she did not contemplate an attack on Austria. *Under these circumstances it is manifest that hitherto only general stipulations could be discussed with General Govone, the Italian envoy to Berlin. The despatches of April 26 gave a new energy to these negotiations, in which full care was taken of the interests of Germany.*’

Who would dream that a treaty in which, indeed, full care had been taken of the interests of—Germany, shall we say? or Prussia?—had already been signed on April 8?

The loyalty of the Italian Government to its engagements, one-sided though they were, was soon to be put to the proof. The conclusion of the secret treaty had had its effect on the Government of Vienna. On the eve of opening the French Chamber Napoleon III. informed Nigra that Austria would cede Venetia in consideration of being left free to compensate herself in Silesia. The cession was to be made to himself, and he would hand on the territory to Italy without conditions. Nigra’s telegram announcing this offer reached La Marmora on May 5, the same day as Govone’s despatch giving an account of the unsatisfactory interviews with Bismarck on the 2nd. Happy would it have been for Italy could this offer have been honourably accepted, especially in the improved form in which it was renewed next day—that is to say, Venetia in exchange for a simple promise of neutrality, without the awkward condition about Silesia. But La Marmora had no hesitation. Without a moment’s delay he replied to Nigra, ‘My first impression is that it is a ‘question of honour and loyalty not to break an engagement ‘to Prussia.’ And from this first impression he never swerved, although sorely piqued by the Prussian refusal to recognise reciprocity in the treaty. What would Bismarck have done in his place? Who shall say? At any rate, La Marmora’s view of his engagements contrasts not unfavourably with that of the King of Prussia.

Meanwhile negotiations for a congress, proposed by Napoleon on May 1, were in progress. Had it assembled the three months' engagement of the treaty would have expired before the sittings were concluded, and Italy would have regained her liberty of action. But the pride of the military party in Austria was making itself felt. On June 1 Count Mensdorff wrote a note in which Austria declined to enter the congress unless an assurance were given that no territorial aggrandisement or increase of power for any of the parties should be discussed, and expressing astonishment that the Pope should not have been invited to take part in 'deliberations which concerned 'the Italian question.' This was, of course, a deathblow to the congress, and war once more became imminent.

The French Emperor, who had hitherto been disposed to throw his influence on the side of Prussia, but was unable to obtain from Bismarck a definite promise of those rectifications of frontier on the Moselle which he desired, now despatched the Duc de Grammont on a mission to Vienna (June 4). The result was an agreement between France and Austria, concluded on June 9, and formally executed on the 12th, by which Napoleon consented to remain neutral, and Austria to hand over Venetia; engaging herself, moreover, not to unite Germany under her own hegemony or add to her territories without the consent of France. The Emperor, on handing over Venetia to Italy, was to bind the latter country to five conditions:—(1) Maintenance of the temporal power; (2) recognition and inviolability of the new frontier with Austria; (3) an indemnity for the cession of the fortresses of the Quadrilateral; (4) assumption of a proportionate amount of the Austrian debt; (5) some restrictions on the development of the port of Venice.

This arrangement was very obviously based on the assumption that Austria was sure to be victorious in a single-handed struggle with Prussia. Such, indeed, was the general supposition all over Europe. The Austrian Minister at Berlin, meeting Count Barral at the time, remarked: 'We shall not always be enemies, and if, as I hope, we beat Prussia, I may confide to you that we shall arrange with you for the cession of Venetia.'

Napoleon III., in communicating this fresh offer, does not appear to have mentioned all the hampering conditions attached to a transfer. Knowing La Marmora's opinions as to the binding character of the engagement to Prussia, he did not ask point-blank for the neutrality of Italy, but

hinted that during the campaign it might turn out to be advantageous for Italy not to conduct the campaign with too much vigour! To have followed such advice would, indeed, have been treachery far worse than openly throwing the treaty overboard. But it was not followed.

Probably some rumour of this base suggestion leaked out and found its way to Berlin at the time. All through the negotiations La Marmora had been vainly expecting a visit from some Prussian general to discuss the plan of the military campaign, but no general came. Now suddenly Usedom began to press upon him the advisability of stirring up revolution in Hungary, and urged that as soon as war was declared he should strike boldly 'for the Danube, meet Prussia at the very centre of the imperial monarchy—in a word, march upon Vienna,' instead of reducing the fortresses of the Quadrilateral in the first instance. Such a course, bold to rashness, would, of course, have committed Italy beyond any possibility of making terms with Austria during the continuance of the campaign. This, and not its strategical feasibility, was the real recommendation of Usedom's proposal in the eyes of Prussia. La Marmora's refusal was misinterpreted, and his decision to assail the Quadrilateral, which was really due to caution, was attributed to a desire 'not to conduct the war with too much vigour.' The inaction after Custozza, due to purely military causes, of a kind which Italians do not like to confess, even to themselves, seemed to confirm these sinister suspicions.

The Prussians entered Hanover and Saxony on June 16. On the 20th Italy declared war. La Marmora would have issued the declaration sooner but for some hesitation on the part of the King. The country was sanguine of victory. The Italian armies on the Mincio and the Po numbered about 200,000 men, besides the volunteers, whilst the Austrian total lay somewhere between 100,000 and 150,000. But the defective organisation of the Italians counterbalanced their numerical preponderance. Horses, arms, munitions of war were wanting, partly owing to mismanagement, partly in consequence of attempted economies during the preceding years.

Worst of all was the distribution of the command. Italy had two possible generals—Cialdini and La Marmora. The only chance of success lay in giving the supreme command to the former. The preoccupations of the latter as Premier and Foreign Minister should have precluded all idea of his

taking the command personally. It is true that Ricasoli was ready to replace him as Prime Minister, and actually took over the seals on June 20, whilst the foreign office had already been entrusted to Jacini when La Marmora left for the front on the 17th. But this was much too late. Whoever was responsible for the conduct of the campaign should have been inspecting, organising, instructing for weeks beforehand. What actually happened was that Victor Emmanuel himself assumed the command-in-chief, with La Marmora, whom he disliked, as chief of the staff, whilst Cialdini, who differed entirely from La Marmora on the strategy to be adopted, had a sort of co-ordinate command on the Po.

Here was every element of failure. The blame has often, but, we think, wrongly, been thrown upon La Marmora's defective plan of campaign. 'His intention to secure the fortresses and then advance by the Tyrol was sound, if not 'brilliant, strategy,' says Mr. King. The material of the Italian army was not at that date sufficiently welded or steeled to succeed in the more brilliant scheme, failure in which would have involved much more serious disaster.

Most of the troops behaved admirably on the day of Custozza, which was no crushing defeat or dishonour to the Italian arms. The losses were not so heavy as those of the Austrians. But tactical incoherence, and errors on the part of the generals, threw away the chance of victory, and made retreat behind the Mincio imperative. Then the *moral* of the army completely broke down. They had met with a reverse where easy victory had been counted on, and the weaker points of Italian character became painfully conspicuous. Widespread disorder made an immediate renewal of attack impossible. The ten days' delay that followed were the necessary consequence of such disorganisation. At the time, in the bitterness of disappointment, this delay was attributed to deliberate acceptance of Napoleon's advice not to conduct the campaign with too much energy. After the war was over the Prussian official report seemed to countenance these suspicions in an ungenerous passage, penned with the contemptuous arrogance of immeasurable military superiority:—'At that time (July 4) it was difficult to reckon that the Italian conduct of the war would have been such as to permit Austria to dispose freely, on the north of the Danube, of the greater part of the army of 'the Mincio.' Mr. Stillman has allowed this slander to trickle through his pages into the minds of Englishmen.



Mr. King's treatment of the episode supplies a wholesome antidote, for which all Italians owe him a debt of gratitude.

Those ten days were very critical. They did allow Archduke Albert to withdraw the larger part of his force and hasten to the support of Benedek, who had been utterly defeated at Sadowa on July 3. That Venetia was then left exposed to the Italians, now recovering from their panic, was immaterial, for immediately after the great battle Austria had renewed her offer to cede Venetia to the Emperor of the French for retrocession to Italy, and this time unconditionally. The Emperor proposed an armistice on this basis. He communicated the proposal by telegram on the night of the 4th. Victor Emmanuel replied, objecting that Italy could not consent without consulting her ally. La Marmora, who was with the King, telegraphed to Nigra: 'To receive Venetia as a gift from France is humiliating for us, and all the world will think that we have betrayed Prussia.' The pride of the nation was bitterly outraged. The haste with which the Emperor had published the Austrian offer in the *Moniteur* of the 5th made it all the more galling. The Government wished to carry on the war, with or without allies, in order to remove the impression of military dishonour, and in the hope that at least the Trentino, where Garibaldi's volunteers had obtained a fair amount of success, might be won by the national arms. Admiral Persano, who had been expected to attack Trieste, was peremptorily ordered by the King 'to cease from his inaction,' on pain of supersession. Next day Depretis, the Minister of Marine, joined the fleet to encourage the Admiral. Whether Persano's courage gave way, or whether he yielded to secret instructions from Depretis contradicting those of the King, which had been sent through La Marmora, is not established. He sailed, but steered for the island of Lissa instead of Trieste. There he encountered the Austrian fleet, and was defeated with loss and some personal disgrace on July 20.

Meanwhile Prussia had been negotiating for peace without much regard for the feelings of Italy, and on the 26th signed preliminaries at Nikolsburg. 'Bismarck,' says Mr. King, 'had again played a disloyal part, and was negotiating for peace in defiance of his ally.' Again we cannot see that there is sufficient evidence or justification for charging Prussia with disloyalty. The vicissitudes of the negotiations were very curious, especially between Prussia and France, but too long and complicated to dis-

cuss here. The turning-point was Goltz's success in extracting from Louis Napoleon himself an assent to Prussian aggrandisement on a scale far in excess of what had been asked of and refused by Drouyn de Lhuys a few hours before. King William could hardly have obtained more had he entered Vienna at the head of his army. It was unreasonable to claim that Prussia should continue fighting, at the risk of being attacked by France on the Rhine, in order to give the Italians a safe opportunity of salving their wounded pride. Bismarck had expressly refused to include the Trentino in the terms of alliance, and the fourth article of the treaty had specially provided that consent to peace or armistice should not be refused when Austria should have consented to cede the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom.

Hostilities between Italy and Austria were actually suspended on July 25th, but it was not till the 12th of August that an armistice was signed. Ricasoli obstinately insisted on retaining at least so much of the Trentino as was actually in Italian occupation—'The honour of Italy,' he exclaimed, 'is more precious than Venetia'—and would have continued the war, courting almost certain defeat, for Austria was already pouring back her troops over the frontier. But at this point La Marmora took the bit between his teeth. 'They will blame me,' he said to the King, 'they will call me traitor, they will indict me. I care not. I take upon myself all the responsibility,' and, without further authority from the Cabinet, gave orders for withdrawal from the Trentino and for the immediate signature of the armistice, which depended on that step.

A man of limited intellectual capacity, but without fear and without reproach, La Marmora threw Italy into a war for which she was unprepared; his over-anxiety to bind Prussia by a treaty led him into diplomatic entanglements that a shrewder negotiator might have avoided; his chivalrous adherence to the terms of the alliance rejected an opportunity of grasping without cost or bloodshed all that was eventually won; his desire for a soldier's glory and over-confidence in his own generalship had the largest share in the military discomfiture of his country; but now his fearless moral courage held her back on the very brink of destruction.

The details of the final consignment of Venetia gave rise to much further discussion, and delayed the actual conclusion of peace till October; but the tenacity with which

Ricasoli haggled over them gained no real advantage for Italy, and, indeed, only further detracted from her dignity. After the conclusion of peace Ricasoli's time was principally occupied with the dissolution of the monasteries, and with a futile attempt to win the goodwill of Rome by a Bill relating to the liberty of the Church and the regulation of ecclesiastical property. The scheme was scornfully rejected by the prelates; although much on the lines of Cavour's earlier proposal, it was disliked by the Chamber, and even by Ricasoli's own colleagues. A general election did not strengthen him. He was again forced by the King to give way to Rattazzi in April 1867. Unable to persuade either Menabrea from the extreme Right, or Crispi from the Left, to join him, the new Premier filled his Cabinet with nonentities, for who would work with 'the man of Aspromonte,' disposed as he was to 'conspire with the party of action, so long as he could count on being able to abandon it in the difficulties which he had created'?

The French had left Rome before Christmas, and the obvious course for a Government that meant to do something was to wait until the various agencies which controlled the action of Italian sympathisers in the Roman States had organised a movement in Rome itself, and then to strike promptly, so that France should find herself face to face with a *fait accompli* before she had time to intervene. The principal of these agencies were the Moderate 'National Committee' and the Mazzinian 'Committee of Action.' But they were jealous of each other, and both had neglected the first duty of the revolutionist—they had provided no arms! In truth the Romans were not for the moment sufficiently eager to risk a rising. They preferred to be 'liberated' by a force from without, and to keep their own skins whole.

Meanwhile Garibaldi was growing impatient. His friends, Crispi among them, tried in vain to keep him quiet till a more opportune moment. 'If you attempt a *coup de main* on the Papal States,' wrote Crispi, 'the French will be in Italy within three months.' It was this perception of obstinate facts that had severed Crispi from the Republicans and alienated him from Mazzini. It marks his passage from the agitator to the statesman. The loss of this faculty of perception some thirty years later led to his downfall.

In spite of good advice Garibaldi had made up his mind that the 'liberation' of Rome could not wait upon the con-

venience of the committees or of the Government. It was doubtful what course Rattazzi would take. He was undoubtedly cognisant of Garibaldi's plans, and encouraged the enlistment of volunteers. Of a sudden, presumably in consequence of some threat from Paris, he arrested Garibaldi on his way towards the Roman frontier. Yet he did not check the volunteers, giving the prefects ostensible instructions to stop the movement, but sending cypher telegrams at the same moment to tell them not to interfere. Numerous demonstrations made it troublesome to keep such a prisoner as Garibaldi; he was sent back to Caprera, but without being put on parole or made to give any undertaking. The island was guarded by cruisers, yet the adventurous old hero made good a most exciting escape on the night of October 16, and reached Leghorn in an open boat on the 20th, to find that Rattazzi had instantly resigned on the news of the evasion, and a new administration had not yet been formed. But Rattazzi retained practical control of the offices during this interregnum, and used it to actively facilitate Garibaldi's journey to join his volunteers, who for three weeks past had been crossing the Papal frontier in small bodies.

On the 27th Menabrea took office, and at once issued a proclamation dissociating the King's Government from any connexion with the enterprise. But it was too late. The French expedition, forced upon the Emperor by the Clerical party, arrived at Civita Vecchia on the 29th, in time to take part in the decisive action of Mentana on November 3, when the Garibaldians were defeated with great loss. The French commander reported home that the *chassepôts*—this was their first trial—had done marvels. Thus the convention was no more. Whatever good there was in it was now undone. The bad had already effected its mischief. For all this the country had to thank Rattazzi. Disliked by the Right as a man of the Left, he was now loathed by the Radicals. 'Unmask him,' cried Libertini, 'unmask him as the fatal man of Novara, more fatal yet 'at Aspromonte, most fatal of all at Mentana.'

Menabrea's administration, the most conservative Italy has experienced, would allow no more playing with fire. Garibaldi was arrested and sent back to Caprera; democratic societies were broken up. In return the French troops withdrew from Rome to Civita Vecchia. But 'Mentana was a great moral blow to Italy. It raised 'the prestige of the Papacy; it half discouraged the

'Italians in their aspirations for Rome. . . . It had no 'glory, for the volunteers showed little of the spirit that 'won Calatafimi and the Volturmo.' Indeed, they dwindled so rapidly under trial that Garibaldi falsely suspected Mazzini of suborning them to desert.

The prevailing feeling at the moment was one of passionate wrath with France. This feeling was not shared by the King or the Premier, nor by La Marmora and others whose political experience enabled them better to appreciate the enormous pressure that had been brought to bear on Napoleon by his Catholic party, and the slight to the French nation at large that was involved in attacking Rome without the lapse of a decent interval after the evacuation.

Before long the vicissitudes of European politics again disclosed a possibility of going to Rome with the consent of France. Jealous of the aggrandisement of Prussia, and fearing her further ambitious plans, Napoleon III. had begun to cast about for allies, and naturally looked to Italy and to Austria. The latter country, still smarting from her defeat of two years before, was now under the guidance of a Liberal and Protestant Premier, Count Beust. A private interchange of letters between the French Emperor and Victor Emmanuel, to which Beust soon became a party, was preparing the ground for a triple alliance. When the King opened his views to Menabrea, the Minister was favourable in principle, but made it a *sine qua non* that Civita Vecchia should be evacuated. In June 1869 the scheme took shape in formal propositions, which contemplated that the French should never return to Rome on any pretext, while Italy reserved the right to occupy it in certain possible contingencies. But France would not consent to abandon the Pope in any event. On this rock the negotiations struck, and it was only on the very eve of the war of 1870 that their course was again resumed. Lanza had meanwhile replaced Menabrea. Visconti Venosta, who sympathised with France, and Sella, with German leanings, were his most prominent colleagues. The French Government did not consult Italy on the question of the Spanish succession, and brushed aside Beust's attempts to mediate. At last, a few days before hostilities broke out, the Duc de Grammont invited Austria and Italy to enter into the triple alliance which had been rejected in the previous summer. But he offered no inducement, he made no fresh concession about Rome. He only counted on Italian gratitude for French aid in the past, forgetful of Nice, of Savoy, of

Mentana. Victor Emmanuel, who always felt a sense of personal obligation to Louis Napoleon, and was confident of French success, would have accepted the proposal, even on those terms. The generals, especially Cialdini, were impatient to fight on the French side. On the other hand, popular feeling was hostile. There were demonstrations in most of the larger towns on July 17; cheering for Prussia, for neutrality, for Rome; cries of 'Down with Mentana!' 'Down with France!'

Ministers hesitated, and were of different minds. They were pledged to economies; they could not face public opinion if they accepted an alliance that did not open the road to Rome. Beust, indeed, did his best for them. He telegraphed to Paris:—

'The Convention of September no longer fits the situation. The day the French leave the Papal States the Italians ought to be able to enter as of right, and with the consent of France and Austria. We shall never have the Italians heart and soul with us unless we extract the thorn of their Roman difficulty. And, frankly, is it not better to see the Holy Father under the protection of the Italian army, rather than the butt of Garibaldian enterprises?'

But the rulers of France were blind. Under the delusion that they were marching to certain victory they scorned Beust's suggestion. They declared that the Convention of September was the only possible basis of an understanding, and that honour forbade them to withdraw from Civita Vecchia without the formal promise of Italy to respect and carry out the conditions of that treaty.

Whether Italy was ultimately to give military aid to France or not, the right course for an Italian Government surely was to point out firmly that the convention had been broken by both parties. Since the events of 1867 it had neither reality nor meaning. It was obsolete. Altered circumstances redoubled the force of the old objections to it. If Italy, after evacuation, chose to continue to respect Papal territory, she should do so of her own accord, and without prejudice to her freedom of action in contingencies that might arise.

But the weakest possible policy was followed. The Ministry expected France to be victorious, and feared her vengeance in the future if she were not now supported. On August 4 Visconti Venosta formally promised to observe the convention. The King had already given a like pledge to the Emperor. Now, like flashes of lightning, came the news of successive French defeats. Victor Emmanuel

received the intelligence of the battle of Wörth at the theatre. He rushed out of his box, and, hastening back to the Palazzo Pitti, threw himself into a chair with the exclamation: 'Poor Emperor! But what a — shave I have had!'

Next day the Duc de Grammont implored Italy to take part in the war, even without Austria, and send an army corps over the Mont Cenis 'by the same route that we took 'in 1859 to go and fight for Italy.' Even now there was no offer of an equivalent. Visconti courteously exposed the absurdity of the proposal, and came to an understanding with Great Britain for the joint observance of neutrality.

It was not till after Gravelotte that the Emperor sent Prince Jérôme to Florence, where he arrived on the 24th with the message, 'You may do what you like with Rome 'provided you send an army.' It was too late. The leave of France counted for little now. The last French soldiers had actually left Civita Vecchia on the 19th. The Left were preparing for an immediate occupation of Rome. The Government delayed, partly hoping that the Papacy might yield now that French protection was removed, or that an internal movement in Rome might cut the knot, partly ashamed to break from their lately renewed adhesion to the convention, and put a slight upon France in her hour of weakness. 'How can we laugh while France is weeping?' cried Ferrari in the Chamber. Sedan spurred the Government on; the change to a Republic in France drove them over the fence. 'If Italy abandons us she is dishonoured,' were Jules Favre's first words on taking office. On September 6 he declared: 'The convention is indeed dead. 'But I shall not denounce it. If France were victorious 'I would yield to your wishes. But she is defeated, and I 'will not afflict an old man already so sorely stricken; 'I will not distress those of my fellow-countrymen who 'would view the misfortunes of the Papacy with consternation.' Yet two days later he gave way to Nigra's persuasiveness. 'We shall see the King's Government go to 'Rome with pleasure. It is a necessary step. The order 'and peace of Italy depend on it.' This consent was coupled with an expression of conviction that Italy, touched by such a sacrifice, would not hesitate to take her place on the field of battle. It was an impossible demand to make on the unselfishness of any nation. An individual may, if he will, sacrifice his interests, ay his very life, to an impulse of generosity. But how shall a statesman be justified who offers up his own people on the altar of chivalrous gratitude to another race?

At length the Italian Government made up their minds. On the 10th they decided to cross the frontier. The advance was intentionally slow in order to give the Pope every opportunity to yield at the very last moment. But Pius determined that a show of resistance should be made as a protest. On the 20th General Cadorna attacked the city: his guns quickly effected a breach near Porta Pia, and Rome was entered. A plébiscite taken on October 2 showed 133,000 votes for annexation and 1,500 against, though, of course, many friends of the Papacy were afraid, or thought it useless to vote, and many others were carried away by the excitement of the moment.

'It was forty years,' to quote Mr. King, 'since Mazzini had pointed to Rome, ten years since Cavour had asked Parliament to proclaim it the capital of Italy. Rome had been won, but not as they would have wished; it was not through the great rising of a people, or because Europe and the Papacy had bowed of free will to the principle of nationality. The accidents of European politics had brought the Italians there. . . . Italy had got her natural metropolis, but no great religious peace had been signed from the Capitol.'

All hope of such a peace had not entirely vanished. Yet further attempts were made to win the Pope's acceptance of the inevitable, and with this in view the actual transfer of the seat of government was delayed till the following summer. The winter was occupied by the discussion of the Law of Guarantees, which settled the future relations of Church and State. The English reader will find a full translation of its text in Mr. Probyn's '*Italy from 1815 to 1871.*' The law was passed on March 21, 1871. Two months later the Pope refused to recognise or accept it. On July 2 the King took up his residence in Rome, and on November 27 opened Parliament in the true capital of the nation. 'Italy is free,' ran the last royal speech before 'leaving Florence, Italy is one. Now it only lies with you to make her great and happy.'

Is Italy great? Is she happy? If the answer is not what we desire, where lies the blame? Where is the canker? Certainly not in her unity, not in the possession of Rome, not even in the irreconcilable attitude of the Papacy. Let the Italians of to-day probe for it in her fiscal and electoral machinery, in her system of criminal procedure, of police and prison administration. Let them unflinchingly apply the cauterizer to the sores they will find. Let them cease to mourn over the defects of the body politic and set to work to cure them, for with them only it lies to 'make Italy great and happy.'



ART. IV.—*The Works of Lord Byron: a New, Revised, and Enlarged Edition.*—‘Letters and Journals.’ Edited by ROWLAND E. PROTHERO, M.A. ‘Poetry.’ Edited by ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE, M.A. London: John Murray, 1898.

‘WHEN the year 1900 is turned, and our nation comes to ‘recount her poetic glories in the century which has ‘then just ended, the first names will be Wordsworth and ‘Byron.’ Thus wrote Matthew Arnold in 1881, and now that the century’s last autumn is passing away, a new edition of Byron’s works appears in the fulness of time to quicken our memories and rekindle our curiosity, by placing before us a complete record of the life, letters, and poetry of one whom Macaulay declared in 1830 to be the most celebrated Englishman of the nineteenth century, and who seventy years later may still be counted among its most striking and illustrious figures.

As the new edition is issued by instalments, and several volumes are still to come, to compare its contents, arrangement, and the editorial accessories with those of preceding editions might be thought premature. We may say, however, that a large number of Byron’s letters, not before printed, have now been added; and that the text of this new material has been prepared from originals, whereas it is now impossible so to collate the text of the greater number of the letters heretofore published. Moore is supposed to have destroyed many of those entrusted to him; and moreover he handled the originals very freely, making large omissions, and transposing passages from one letter to another, though we presume that he did not re-write and amplify passages after the fashion in which certain French editors have dealt with recent memoirs. The letters now for the first time published by Mr. Murray were for the most part inaccessible to Moore. But for all these details we may refer our readers to the concise and valuable prefaces appended to the three volumes of Letters and Journals.

We have now, therefore, a substantial acquisition of fresh and quite authentic material, though it would be rash to assume that all important documents are included, for the family archives are still held in reserve. It is admitted by the editor that the literary value of the letters now printed for the first time is not high, but he explains that in publishing, with a few exceptions, the whole available

correspondence, he has acted on the principle that they form an aggregate collection of great biographical interest, and may thus serve as the best substitute for the lost memoirs. We may agree that any scrap of a great man's writing, or even any words spoken, may throw some light upon his character, whether the subject be trivial or tremendous, a business letter to his solicitor or a defiance of society; for even though careless readers chance to miss some pearl strung at random on a string of commonplaces, to the higher criticism nothing is quite valueless. In this instance, at any rate, no pains have been spared to place the real Lord Byron, as described more or less unconsciously by himself, before his fellow-countrymen; and the result is to confirm his reputation as a first-class letter-writer. The private and confidential correspondence of eminent literary men would be usually more decorous than interesting; but Byron, though he is not always respectable, is never dull. The correspondence and journals, taken all together, constitute the most interesting and characteristic collection of its kind in English literature.

In regard to the effect upon his personal reputation, we have long known what manner of man was Byron; nor is it likely that, after passing in review the complete array of evidence collected in these volumes, the general verdict of posterity will be sensibly modified. Those who judge him should bear in mind that perhaps no famous life has ever been so thoroughly laid bare, or scrutinised with greater severity. The tendency of biographers is to soften down errors and praise where they can; and in an autobiography the writer can tell his own story. But the assiduous searching out and publication of every letter and diary that can be gathered or gleaned is a different ordeal, which might try the reputation of most of us; while in the case of an impulsive, wayward, high-spirited man, exposed to strong temptations, with all a poet's traditional irritability, whose rank and genius concentrated public attention on his writings from his early youth, this test must be extremely severe. Many of the letters are of a sort that do not ordinarily appear in a biography. Byron's letters to his wife at the time of their separation, which are moderate and even dignified, are supplemented by his wife's letters to him and to her friends, full of mysterious imputations; and there are letters to and from the lady with whom his *liaison* was notorious. His own reckless letters from Venice to Moore, and those from Shelley and others describing his

dissipated habits, were clearly never intended for general reading after his death. Of course most of these are not now produced for the first time, nor do we argue that they ought never to have appeared, for the biographical interest is undeniable. Our point is that the publication of such private and damaging correspondence is so very unusual in biographies that it places Byron at a special disadvantage, and that when we pass our judgement upon him we are bound to take into account the unsparing use that has been made of papers connected with the most intimate transactions of a lifetime which was no more than a short and stormy passage from youth to manhood; for he was cut off before the age at which men abandon the wild ways of their springtide, and are usually disposed to obliterate the record of them. At least one recent biography might be mentioned which would have read differently if it had been compiled with similar candour.

The annotations subjoined to almost every page of the text are so ample and particular as to furnish in themselves extensive reading. The notices of every person named would go far to serve as a brief biographical dictionary of Byron's contemporaries, whether known or unknown to fame. We get a concise account of Madame de Staël—her birth, books, and political opinions—very useful to those who had no previous acquaintance with her. Lady Morgan and Joanna Southcott obtain quite as much space as would be allotted to them in any handbook of celebrities. Beau Brummell and Lord Castlereagh are treated with similar liberality. There is a full account, taken from the 'Examiner,' of the procession with which Louis XVIII. made his entry into London in 1814. The notes—of about four pages each—upon Hobhouse and Lord Carlisle may be justified by their close connexion with Byron's affairs; though some of us might have been content with less. Allusions to such notorious evildoers as Tarquin are explained, and stock quotations from Shakespeare have been carefully verified. The result is that a reader might go through this edition of Byron with the very slightest previous knowledge of general literature or of contemporary history, and might give himself a very fair middle-class education in the process, although the consequence might be to imbue him with what Coleridge has called 'a passion for the disconnected.' Nevertheless we readily acknowledge the thorough execution of this part of the editorial work, and the very meritorious labour that has been spent upon bringing together every kind of

document and reference that can inform or enlighten us upon the main subjects of Byron's life and writings. In the poems the practice of giving in notes the rough drafts and rejected versions of passages and lines, so as to show the poet at work, seems to us not altogether fair to him, and is occasionally distracting to those readers who enjoy a fine picture without asking how the colours were mixed, or are not anxious about the secrets of a good dinner. Yet to students of method, to the fellow-craftsman, and to the literary virtuoso, these variant readings, of which there are sometimes four to a single line, may often be of substantial interest, as throwing light on the tendencies and predilections of taste which are the formative influences upon style in prose or poetry.

Probably the most favourable circumstance for a poet is that he should only be known, like the Divinity of Nature, from his works; or at least that, like Wordsworth, he should keep the noiseless tenour of his way down some secluded vale of life, whereby his poems stand out in clear relief like fine paintings on a plain wall. Is there any modern English poet of the first class, except Byron, whose entire prose writings and biography are bound up in standard editions with his poetry? The question is at any rate worth asking, because certainly there is no case in which the record of a poet's private life and personal fortunes has so greatly affected, for good or for ill, his poetic reputation. Those who detested his character and condemned his way of living found it difficult to praise his verses; they detected the serpent under every stone. For those who were fascinated by the picture of a reckless prodigal, always in love and in debt, with fierce passions and a haughty contempt for the world, who defied public opinion and was suspected of unutterable things—such a personality added enormous zest to his poetry. But now that Byron's whole career has been once more laid out before his countrymen, with light poured on to it from every cranny and peephole, those who take up this final edition of his life and works must feel that their main object and duty should be to form an unbiassed estimate of the true value, apart from the author's rank and private history, of poems which must always hold a permanent place in the high imaginative literature of England.

It may be said that every writer of force and originality traverses two phases of opinion before his substantive rank in the great order of merit is definitely fixed: he is either

depressed or exalted unduly. He may be neglected or cheapened by his own generation, and praised to the skies by posterity; or his fame may undergo the inverse treatment, until he settles down to his proper level. Byron's reputation has passed through sharper vicissitudes than have befallen most of his compeers; for though no poet has ever shot up in a brief lifetime to a higher pinnacle of fame, or made a wider impression upon the world around him, after his death he seems to have declined slowly, in England, to a point far below his real merits. And at this moment there is no celebrated poet, perhaps no writer, in regard to whom the final judgement of critics and men of letters is so imperfectly determined. Here is a man whom Goethe accounted a character of unique eminence, with supreme creative power, whose poetry, he admitted, had influenced his own later verse—one of those who gave strenuous impulse to the romantic movement throughout England, France, and Germany in the first quarter of this century, who set the fashion of his day in England, stirred and shaped the popular imagination, and struck a far resonant note in our poetry. Yet after his death he suffered a kind of eclipse; his work was much more unduly depreciated than it had been extolled; while in our own time such critics as Matthew Arnold and Mr. Swinburne have been in profound disagreement on the question of his worth and value as a poet. Nor is it possible for impartial persons to accept the judgement of either of these two eminent artists in poetry, since Arnold placed Wordsworth and Byron by anticipation on the same level at this century's end, whereas Wordsworth stands now far higher. And the bitter disdain which Mr. Swinburne has poured upon Byron's verse and character, though tempered by acknowledgement of his strength and cleverness, and by approbation of his political views, excites some indignation and a sympathetic reaction in his favour. One can imagine the ghost of Byron rebuking his critic with the words of the Miltonic Satan, 'Ye knew me once no mate For you, there sitting 'where ye durst not soar;' for in his masculine defiant attitude and daring flights the elder poet overtops and looks down upon the fine musical artist of our own day.

Some of the causes which have combined to lower Byron's popularity are not far to seek. The change of times, circumstance, and taste has been adverse to him. The political school which he so ardently represented has done its work; the Tory statesmen of the Metternich and Castle-

reagh type, who laid heavy hands upon nations striving for light and liberty, have gone down to their own place; the period of stifling repression has long ended in Europe. Italy and Greece are free, the lofty appeals to classic heroism are out of date, and such fiery high-swelling trumpet notes as

‘Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,  
Streams like a thunderstorm *against* the wind,’

fall upon cold and fastidious ears. ‘The day will come,’ said Mazzini in after-years, ‘when the democracy will acknowledge its debt to Byron;’ but the demos is notoriously ungrateful, and the subject races have now won their independence. The shadow of discouragement and weariness which passed over sensitive minds at the beginning of this century, a period of political disillusion, has long been swept away by the prosperity and sanguine activities of the Victorian era; and the literary style has changed with the times. Melancholy moods, attitudes of scornful despair, tales of fierce love and bloody revenge are strange and improbable to readers who delight in situations and emotions with which they are familiar, who demand exactitude in detail and correct versification; while sweet harmonies, perfection of metre, middle-class pastorals, and a blameless moral tone came in with Tennyson. In short, many of the qualities which enchanted Byron’s own generation have disenchanted our own, both in his works and his life; for when Macaulay wrote in 1830 that the time would come when his ‘rank and private history will not be regarded in ‘estimating his poetry,’ he took no account of future editions enlarged and annotated, or of biographies of ‘The ‘Real Lord Byron;’ whereby it has come to pass, as we suspect, that the present world knows more of Byron’s private history than of his poems. His faults and follies stand out more prominently than ever; his story is more attractive reading than most romances; and the stricter morality of the day condemns him more severely than did the society to which he belonged. Psychological speculation is now so much more practised in literature than formerly, there is so much more interest in ‘the man ‘behind the book,’ that serious moral delinquencies, authentically recorded and eagerly read, operate more adversely than ever in affecting the public judgement upon Byron’s poetry, because they provide a damaging commentary upon it. His contemporaries—Coleridge, Keats, Shelley—lived so much apart from the great world of their day that

important changes in manners and social opinion have made much less difference in the standard by which their lives are compared with their work. Their poetry, moreover, was mainly impersonal. Whereas Byron, by stamping his own character on so much of his verse, created a dangerous interest in the man himself; and his *empeiria* (as Goethe calls it), his too exclusively worldly experience, identified him with his particular class in society, rendering him largely the responsible representative of a libertinism in habits and sentiments that was more pardonable in his time than in our own. His poetry belongs also in another sense to the world he lived in: it is incessantly occupied with current events and circumstance, with Spain, Italy, and Greece as he actually saw them, with comparisons of their visible condition and past glories, with Peninsular battle-fields, and with Waterloo. Of worldliness in this objective meaning his contemporaries had some share, yet they instinctively avoided the waste of their power upon it; and so their finest poetry is beautiful by its detachment, by a certain magical faculty of treating myth, romance, and the mystery of man's sympathetic relations with universal Nature.

A recent French critic of Chateaubriand, who defines the 'romantisme' of that epoch as no more than a great waking up of the poetic spirit, says that the movement was moral and psychological generally before it spread into literature. In criticising Byron's poetry we have to bear in mind that he came in on the first wave of this flood, which overflowed the exhausted and arid field of poetry at the end of the last century, fertilising it with colour and emotion. The comparison between Byron in England and Chateaubriand in France must have been often drawn. The similarity in their style, their moody, melancholy outlook upon common humanity, their aristocratic temper, their self-consciousness, their influence upon the literature of the two countries, the enthusiasm that they excited among the ardent spirits of the generation that reached manhood immediately after them, and the vain attempts of the elder critics to resist their popularity and deny their genius — form a remarkable parallel in literary history. As Jeffrey failed at first to discern the promise of Byron, so Morellet could only perceive the obviously weak points of Chateaubriand, laying stress on his affectations, his inflated language, his sentimental exaggeration, upon all the faults which were common to these two men of genius, the defects of their qualities, the

energetic rebound from the classic level of orderly taste and measured style. It was the ancient *régime* contending against a revolutionary uprising, and in poetry, as in politics, the leaders of revolution are sure to be excessive, to force their notes, to frighten their elders, and to scandalise the conservative mind. Yet just as Chateaubriand, after passing through his period of depression, is now rising again to his proper place in French literature, so we may hope that an impartial survey of Byron's verse will help to determine the rank that he is likely to hold permanently, although the high tide of Romance in poetry has at this moment fallen to a low ebb, and the spell which it laid upon our forefathers may have lost its power in an altered world.

It must be counted to the credit of these Romantic writers that at any rate they widened and varied the sphere and the resources of their art, by introducing the Oriental element, so to speak, into the imaginative literature of modern Europe. They brought the lands of ancient civilisation again within the sphere of poetry, reviving into fresh animation the classic glories of Hellas, reopening the gates of the mysterious East, and showing us the Greek races still striving, as they were twenty-two centuries earlier, for freedom against the barbarous strength of an Asiatic empire. Byron was the first of the poets who headed this literary crusade for the succour of Christianity against Islam in the unending contest between East and West on the shores of the Mediterranean, and in this cause he eventually died. Chateaubriand, Lamartine, and Victor Hugo were also travellers in Asia, and had drawn inspiration from that source; they all instinctively obeyed, like Bonaparte, the impulse which sends adventurous and imaginative spirits toward that region of strong passions and primitive manners, where human life is of little matter, and where the tragic situations of drama and fiction may at any time be witnessed in their simple reality. The effect was to introduce fresh blood into the views of old romance; and Byron led the van of an illustrious line of poets who turned their *impressions de voyage* into glowing verse, for the others only trod in his footsteps and wrote on his model, while Lamartine openly imitated him in his 'Dernier Chant de Childe Harold.' For the first time the Eastern tale was now told by a poet who had actually seen Eastern lands and races, their scenery and their cities, who drew his figures and landscape with his eye on the objects, and had not mixed his local colours by the process of skimming books of travel for myths, legends,



costume, or customs, with such result as may be seen in Moore's 'Lalla Rookh' and in Southey's 'Thalaba,' or even in Scott's 'Talisman.' The preface to this novel shows that Scott fully appreciated the risk of competing with Byron, albeit in prose, in the field of Asiatic romance, yet all his skill avails little to diminish the sense of conventional figure-drawing and of uncertainty in important details when they are not gathered in the field, but only transplanted from the library.

Byron has noticed in one of his letters the errors of this kind into which a great poet must fall whose accurate observation has been confined mainly to his own country. 'There is much natural talent,' he writes, 'spilt over the "Excursion," yet Wordsworth says of Greece that it is a land of

'Rivers, fertile plains, and sounding shores  
Under a cope of variegated sky.

'The rivers are dry half the year, the plains are barren, the shores still and tideless, the sky is anything but variegated, being for months and months beautifully blue.'

This may be thought trivial criticism, yet it is evidence of the attention given by Byron to precise description. His accuracy in Oriental costume was also a novelty at that time, when so little was known of Oriental lore that even Mr. Murray 'doubted the propriety of putting the name of 'Cain into the mouth of a Mahomedan.' With regard to his characters, we may readily admit that in the 'Giaour' or the 'Bride of Abydos' the heroes and heroines behave and speak after the fashion of high-flying Western romance, and that their lofty sentiments in love or death have nothing specifically Oriental about them. But this was merely the romantic style used by all Byron's contemporaries, and generally accepted by the taste of that day as essential to the metrical rendering of a passionate love-story. It may be argued, with Scott, that when a writer of fiction takes in hand a distant age or country, he is obliged to translate ideas and their expression into forms with which his readers are, to some extent, familiar. Byron seasoned his Oriental tales with phrases and imagery borrowed from the East; but whatever scenic or characteristic effects might have thus been produced are seriously marred by the explanatory notices and erudite references to authorities that are appended to the text. This fashion of garnishing with far-fetched outlandish words, in order to give the requisite flavour of time or place, was peculiar

to the new romantic school of his era; it was the poetical dialect of the time, and Byron employed it too copiously. Yet, with all his faults, he remains a splendid colourist, who broke through a limited mannerism in poetry, and led forth his readers into an unexplored region of cloudless sky and purple sea, where the serene aspect of nature could be powerfully contrasted with the shadow of death and desolation cast over it by the violence of man.

Undoubtedly this contrast, between fair scenery and foul barbarism, had been presented more than once in poetry; yet no one before Byron had brought it out with the sure hand of an eye-witness, or with such ardent sympathy for a nation which had been for centuries trodden under the feet of aliens in race and religion, yet still clinging to its ancient traditions of freedom. Throughout his descriptive poems, from 'Childe Harold' to 'Don Juan,' it is the true and forcible impression, taken from sight of the thing itself, that gives vigour and animation to his pictures, and that has stamped on the memory the splendid opening of the 'Giaour,' the meditations in Venice and Rome, the glorious scenery of the Greek islands, and even such single lines as

'By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone.'

In the art of painting what may be called historical landscape, where retrospective associations give intellectual colour to the picture, Byron has very few rivals. His descriptions of the Lake of Geneva, of Clarens, of the Trojan plain—

'High barrows, without marble or a name,  
A vast, untilled, and mountain-skirted plain,  
And Ida in the distance'—

have the quality of faithful drawing illumined by imaginative power. They have certainly touched the emotions and enhanced the pleasure of all travellers in the last three generations whose minds are accessible to poetic suggestion; and if at the present day their style be thought too elaborate and the allusions commonplace, it cannot be denied that the fine art of English composition would be poorer without them. The stanzas in 'Childe Harold' on Waterloo are full of the energy which takes hold of and poetically elevates the incidents of war—the distant cannon, the startled dancers, the transition from the ball-room to the battle-field, from the gaiety of life to the stillness of death. Nothing very original or profound in all this, it may be said; yet the great difficulty of dealing adequately with

heroic action in contemporary verse, of writing a poem on a campaign that has just been reported in the newspapers, is exemplified by the fact that Walter Scott's two compositions on Waterloo are failures; nor has any poet since Byron yet succeeded in giving us a good modern battle-piece.

Nevertheless there is much in Byron's longer poems (excepting always 'Don Juan') that seems tedious to the modern reader; there are descriptions and declamations too long drawn-out to sustain the interest; and there are many lines that are superfluous, untidy, and sometimes ungrammatical. One can only plead, in extenuation of these defects, that the fashion of his day was for long metrical romance, in which it is difficult to maintain the high standard of careful composition exacted by the latest criticism. It is almost impossible to tell a long story in verse that shall be throughout poetical. And one main reason why this fashion has nearly passed away may be surmised to be that the versified narrative cannot adapt itself in this respect to the present taste, which is impatient of fluent lengthy heroics, refusing to accept them for the sake of some finely executed passages. Southey's epics are now quite unreadable, and many of the blemishes in Byron's poetry are inseparable from the romantic style; they are to be found in Scott's metrical tales, which have much redundancy and some weak versification; while his chiefs and warriors often talk a stilted chivalrous language which would now be discarded as theatrical. Byron's personages have the high tragic accent and costume; yet one must admit that they have also a fierce vitality; and as for the crimes and passions of his Turkish pashas and Greek patriots, he had actually seen the men and heard of their deeds. The fact that he also portrayed more unreal characters in dismal drapery—Lara, Conrad, and Manfred, as the mouthpieces of splenetic misanthropy—has led to some unjust depreciation of his capacity for veritable delineation. Macaulay, for example, in his essay on Byron, observes that 'Johnson, 'the man whom Don Juan met in the slave market, is a 'striking failure. How differently would Sir Walter Scott 'have drawn a bluff, fearless Englishman in such a 'situation!' and Mr. Swinburne echoes this criticism. But it is unfair to compare a minor character, slightly sketched into a poem for the purposes of the plot, with the full-length portrait that might have been made of him by a first-class artist in prose. The proper comparison

would be between the figures in the metrical romances of the two poets, whereby it might be shown that Scott could take as little trouble as Byron did about an unimportant subsidiary actor. In regard to the leading heroes and heroines, Scott's poetic creations are hardly more interesting or dramatic than Byron's; and whenever he makes, even in prose, an excursion into Asia, his figure-drawing becomes conventional. But he was usually at the disadvantage, from which Byron was certainly free, of being hampered by an inartistic propensity to make virtuous heroes triumph in the long run.

Yet it must be admitted that no poet of the same calibre has turned out so much loose uneven work as Byron. His lapses into lines that are lame or dull are the more vexatious to the correct modern ear when, as sometimes happens, they spoil a fine passage, and in the midst of a superb flight his muse comes down with a broken wing. In the subjoined stanza, for example, from the Waterloo episode in 'Childe Harold,' the first five lines are clear, strenuous, and concise, while the next three are confused and clumsy; so that though he recovers himself in the final line, the general effect is much damaged:

'Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,  
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,  
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,  
 The morn the marshalling in arms—the day  
 Battle's magnificently stern array.  
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, *which when rent,*  
*The earth is covered thick with other clay,*  
*Which her own clay shall cover,* heaped and pent,  
 Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent.'

These blots, and there are many, become less pardonable when we observe, from the new edition, that Byron by no means neglected revision of his work. But his impetuous temper, and the circumstance of his writing far from the printing-press, encouraged hasty execution; and though the most true remark that 'easy writing is devilish hard 'reading' is his own, though he praised excessively the chiselled verse of Pope, he was always inclined to pose as one who threw off jets of boiling inspiration, and in one letter he compares himself to the tiger who makes or misses his point in one spring. He ranked Pope first among English poets, yet he learnt nothing in that school; he pretended to undervalue Shakespeare, yet he must have had the plays by heart, for his letters bristle with quotations

from them. His avowed taste in poetry is hard to reconcile with his own performances: his verse was rushing, irregular, audacious, yet he overpraises the smooth composition of Rogers; he dealt in heroic themes and passionate love stories, yet Crabbe's humble pastorals had their full charm for him. Except Crabbe and Rogers, he declared, 'we are all—Scott, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, and I—upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system, not worth a damn in itself;' but among these are some leaders of the great nineteenth-century renaissance in English verse; and Byron was foremost in the revolt against unnatural insipidity which has brought us through romance to realism, by his clear apprehension of natural form and colour, and even by the havoc which he made among conventional respectabilities. He dwelt too incessantly upon his own sorrows and sufferings; and in the gloomy soliloquies of his dramatic characters we have an actor constantly reappearing in his favourite part. Yet this also was a novelty to the generation brought up on the impersonal poetry of the classic school; and here, again, he is a forerunner of the self-reflecting analytical style that is common in our own day; for there is a Byronic echo in the 'divine despair' of Tennyson. The melancholy brooding spirit, dissatisfied with society and detesting complacency, had for some time been in the air; it had affected the literature of France and Germany; Werther, Obermann, and René are all moulded on the same type with Childe Harold; yet Sainte-Beuve rightly says that this identity of type does not mean imitation—it means that the writers were all in the same atmosphere. There is everywhere the same reaction against philosophic optimism and the same antipathy to the ways of mankind 'so vain and melancholy.' They sought refuge from inborn ennui or irritability among the mountains, on the sea, or in distant voyages, and they instinctively embodied these moods and feelings in various personages of fiction, in the solitary wanderer, in the fierce outlaw, in the man 'with chilling mystery of mien,' who rails against heaven and humanity. Their literature, in short, however overcoloured it may have been, did represent a generally prevailing characteristic among men of excessive sensibility at a time of stir and tumult in the world around them; it was not a mere unnatural invention, though we must leave to the psychologist the task of tracing a connexion between this mental attitude and the circumstances that generated it. But the self-occupied mind has no dramatic power, and so their reper-

tory contained one single character, a reproduction of their own in different attitudes and situations. Chateaubriand may be said never to have dropped his mask; whereas Byron, whose English sense of humour must have fought against taking himself so very seriously, relieved his conscience by lapses into epigram, irony, and persiflage. Thus in the same year (1818), and from the same place (Venice), he produced the fourth canto of '*Childe Harold*,' full of deep longing for unbroken solitude:—

‘There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep sea, and Music in its roar;’

and also ‘*Beppo*,’ a satirical sketch of the loose and easy Venetian society in which he was actually living. Here, again, his somewhat ribald letters from Venice do his romantic poetry some wrong; but in fact he had a diabolic pleasure in betraying himself, and his ‘*Mémoires d’Outre Tombe*,’ if they had been preserved, would have been very different from Chateaubriand’s elaborate autobiography.

It was the spectacle of Christians groaning under Turkish oppression, and of their heroic resistance, that inspired three of Byron’s finest poems, the ‘*Giaour*,’ the ‘*Bride of Abydos*,’ the ‘*Siege of Corinth*.’ On this subject he was so heartily in earnest that he could even lose sight of his own woes; and notwithstanding the exuberance of colour and sentiment, these tales still hold their place in the first rank of metrical romance. Their construction is imperfect, even fragmentary; yet while Scott could put together and tell his story much better, not even Scott could drive it onward and sustain the verse at a high level with greater energy, or decorate his narrative with finer description of scenery, or give more intensity to the moments of fierce action. The splendid apostrophe to Greece in the ‘*Giaour*’—

‘Clime of the forgotten brave!  
Whose land from plain to mountain cave  
Was Freedom’s home or Glory’s grave,’

has forty lines of unsurpassed beauty and fire, written in the manuscript, as a note tells us, in a hurried and almost illegible hand—an authentic example of true improvisation which the elaborate poets of our own day may match if they can. The tumid phrase and melodramatic figuring—

‘Dark and unearthly is the scowl  
That glares beneath his dusky cowl’

are now worn-out theatrical properties ; yet those who have seen the untamed Asiatic might find it hard to overdraw the murderous hate and sullen ferocity that his face, or his victim's, will occasionally disclose. The heroes, at any rate, love and die in a masculine way ; it is the old tragic theme of bitter unmerited misfortune, of daring adventure that ends fatally, without any of the wailing sensuality that infects the more harmonious poetry of a later day. There are, perhaps, for modern taste, too many outlandish words and references to Eastern customs or beliefs, requiring glossaries and marginal explanations ; nor does the profuse annotation of the present edition lighten a reader's burden in this respect. Byron had no business to write 'By pale Phingari's trembling 'light,' leaving us at the mercy of assiduous editors to expound that 'Phingari' is the Greek *φεγγάριον*, and stands here for the moon. And if he could have spared us such Orientalisms as 'Al Sirât's arch,' or 'avenging Monkir's 'scythe,' we should have mixed up less desultory reading with the enjoyment of fine passages. He gives us too much of his local colouring, he checks the rush of his verse by superfluous metaphors, he has weak and halting lines. The style is heated and fuming, yet the dainty art-critic who lays hands on such metal thrown red hot from the forge may chance to burn his fingers over it. Nor must we forget that in these poems Byron brought the classic lands of Greece and the Levant within the sphere of modern romance, and has unquestionably added some 'deathless pages' to English literature.

Byron has told us why he adopted for the 'Corsair,' and afterwards for 'Lara,' 'the good old and now neglected heroic couplet :—

'The stanza of Spenser is, perhaps, too slow and dignified for narrative, though I confess it is the measure after my own heart ; Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto triumphed completely over the fatal facility of the octosyllabic verse ; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius ; in blank verse Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and barren rocks on which they are kindled.' \*

We doubt much, from a comparison of the poems, whether the experiment of changing his metre was successful. The short eight-syllabled line displayed Byron's capacity for vigorous concision and swift movement ; it is eminently suited for

strength and speed; whereas in the slow processional couplet he becomes diffuse, often tedious; he has room for more rhetoric and verbosity; he falls more into the error of describing at length the character and sentiments of his gloomy heroes, instead of letting them act and speak for themselves. At moments when inspiration is running low, and a gap has to be filled up, the shorter line needs less padding, and can be more rapidly run over when it is weak. Whereas a feeble heroic couplet becomes ponderous and sinks more quickly into bathos—as in the following sample from the ‘*Corsair*’ :—

‘Oh! burst the Haram, wrong not on your lives  
One female form—remember—we have wives.’

And the consequence has been that ‘*Lara*’ and the ‘*Corsair*’ are now, we believe, the least readable of Byron’s metrical romances.

Of Byron’s dramas we are obliged to say that, to borrow his own metaphor, he would have fared better as a poet if he had taken warning from the beacons, and had given blank verse a wide berth, instead of setting himself boldly on a course which, as he evidently knew, is full of peril for fast-sailing free-going versifiers. He saw that he could not approach the great masters of this measure, he was resolved not to imitate them; and so he appears to have chosen the singular alternative of writing nothing that should in the least resemble them. His general object as a playwright is stated, in a letter about ‘*Sardanapalus*,’ to have been ‘to dramatise striking passages of history and mythology.’

‘You will find,’ he adds most truly, ‘all this very unlike Shakespeare; and so much the better in one sense, for I look upon him to be the worst of models, though the most extraordinary of writers. It has been my object to be as simple and severe as Alfieri, and I have broken down the poetry as nearly as I could to common language.’

And undoubtedly he did break it down so effectually that much of his blank verse hobbles like a lame horse, being often mere prose printed in short lines. Here are two specimens, not cut into lengths, which have no metrical construction at all :—

‘Unless you keep company with him, and you seem scarce used to such high society, you can’t tell how he approaches.’ \*

‘Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace, but on condition that the three young princes are given up as hostages.’ †

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\* The Deformed Transformed (part I. scene 1).

† Sardanapalus (act v. scene 1).



Many others of the same quality might be given, in which the *disjecti membra poetæ* would be exceedingly hard to find. It is surprising that a writer of Byron's experience should have fallen into the error of supposing that simplicity could be attained by the mere use of common language. For even Wordsworth, who is a master of simple strength, could never allow his peasants to talk their ordinary vernacular without a fatal drop into the commonplace; and all verse that is to be plain and unaffected in style and thought requires the most studious composition. Byron seems scarcely to have understood that blank verse has any rules of scansion, and his signal failure in this metre has become less tolerable and more conspicuous, since Keats in his day, and Tennyson after him, have carefully studied the construction of blank verse, and have left us admirable examples of its capacity for romantic expression. It is indeed strange that Byron should have fancied that he could use so delicate an instrument with a rough unpractised hand.

There are some vigorous passages scattered through the plays, and we have it on record that Dr. Parr could not sleep a wink after reading 'Sardanapalus.' Nevertheless, we fear that the present generation will find little cause for demurring to Jeffrey's judgement upon the tragedies, that they are for the most part 'solemn, prolix, and ostentatious.' They were not composed, as Byron himself explained, 'with the most remote view to the stage,' so that he had not before his eyes the wholesome fear of a critical audience. In truth it must be admitted that he lacked the true dramatic instinct; he could only set up his leading figures to deliver imposing speeches appropriate to a tragic situation; and one may guess that the consciousness of awkward handling weighed upon the spirit and style of his blank verse, for his ear seems to have completely misled him when it had lost the guidance of recurrent rhyme. Of 'Cain: a Mystery,' one must speak reverently, since Walter Scott, to whom it was dedicated, wrote that the author had 'matched Milton 'on his own ground;' yet in *Lucifer*, who leads the dialogue, we have little more than a spectral embodiment of Byron's own rebellious temper; and in this poem, as in 'Manfred,' the discussion of metaphysical problems carries him beyond his depth. There are, nevertheless, some fine declamatory passages; and we may quote as a curiosity one soft line, fresh from the Swiss mountains:

'Pipes in the liberal air  
Mixed with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd,'

which is to be found in 'Manfred' and might have been taken from the 'Excursion.'

When we turn from the plays to the lyrics, we see at once the importance, to a poet, of choosing rightly the metrical form that is the best expression of his peculiar genius. In some of these shorter poems Byron rises to his highest level, and by these will his popularity be permanently maintained. They are certainly of very unequal merit; yet when Byron is condemned for artificiality and glaring colour, we may point to the poem beginning 'And thou art dead, so young 'and fair,' where form and feeling are in harmony throughout eight long stanzas, without a single line that is feeble or overcharged:

'The better days of life were ours;  
The worst can be but mine;  
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,  
Shall never more be thine.  
The silence of that dreamless sleep  
I envy now too much to weep;  
Nor need I to repine  
That all those charms have passed away,  
I might have watched through long decay.'

There is no novelty in the ideas, nor does he open the deeper vein of thoughts that touch the mind with a sense of mortality. Yet the verse has a masculine brevity that renders effectively the attitude in which men may well be content firmly to confront an irreparable misfortune.

In his poems of strenuous action, although Byron has not the rare quality of heroic simplicity, he could at times strike a high vibrating war note, and could interpret romantically the patriotic spirit. The two stanzas which we quote from the *Hebrew Melodies* show that he could now and then shake off the redundant metaphors and epithets that overload too much of his impetuous verse, and use his strength freely:—

'Though thou art fallen, while we are free  
Thou shalt not taste of death!  
The generous blood that flowed from thee  
Disdains to sink beneath;  
Within our veins its currents be,  
Thy spirit on our breath.

'Thy name, our charging hosts along  
Shall be their battle word;  
Thy fall, the theme of choral song  
By virgin voices poured—  
To weep would do thy glory wrong;  
Thou shalt not be deplored.'

And we have another magnificent example of Byron's lyrical power in the 'Isles of Greece,' where the two lines,

' Ah, no ! the voices of the dead  
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,'

drop suddenly into the elegiac strain, into a mournful echo that dwells upon the ear, followed by the rising note of a call to arms. Mr. Swinburne has described this poem as 'composed of strong oratorical effects arranged in vigorous 'and telling succession; '\* upon which it is enough to observe that contemporary efforts at writing war songs have for the most part signally failed, while the 'Isles of Greece' will long continue to stir the masculine imagination of Englishmen.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that Byron's Occasional Pieces abound with cheap pathos, dubious fervour, and a kind of commonplace sentimentality that comes out in the form as well as in the feeling of his inferior work. The rhymes are apt to be hackneyed, the similes are sometimes tagged on awkwardly instead of being weaved into the texture, the expression has often lost its strength, and the emotion lacks sincerity. Byron, like his brother poets, wrote copiously what was published indiscriminately; but if the first-class work had not been very good it would never have buoyed up above sheer oblivion so much that was third-rate and bad. His pieces are much *too* occasional, for he was prone to indulgence in hasty verse whenever the fit was upon him, or as a method of enlisting public sympathy with his own misconduct, so that he was constantly appearing before the world as a perfidious sentimentalist, with a false air of lamentation over the misfortunes which he had brought upon himself, as in the Poems of the Separation. Yet when he shook off his personal grief and took to politics, no other poet could more vividly express his intense living interest in the great events of his time, or strike the proper note of some great catastrophe. It may be affirmed that the 'Ode to Napoleon' is better than anything else that has been written in English upon the most astonishing career in modern history:—

' The triumph and the vanity,  
The rapture of the strife,  
The earthquake voice of Victory,  
To thee the breath of life.

The sword, the sceptre, and that sway  
Which man seemed made but to obey,  
Wherewith renown was rife—  
All quelled; Dark Spirit, what must be  
The madness of thy memory!

‘The Desolator desolate,  
The Victor overthrown;  
The Arbiter of others’ fate  
A suppliant for his own!  
Is it some yet imperial hope  
That with such change can calmly cope?  
Or dread of death alone?  
To die a prince or live a slave,  
Thy choice is most ignobly brave.’

In the first of these two stanzas the seventh line is weak and breaks the rapid rush of the verse; but the high pressure and impetus of the poem are sustained throughout twenty stanzas, producing the effect of an improvisatore who stops rather from want of breath than from any other lack of inspiration. In this respect the ode is a rare poetical exploit; for all poems composed under the spur of the moment, upon some memorable incident that has just startled the world, must be more or less improvised, and must hit the right pitch of extraordinary popular emotion. It is the difficulty of turning out good work under such arduous conditions that has too often shipwrecked or stranded some unlucky laureate.

There is one province of verse, if not exactly of poetry, in which Byron reigns undisputedly, though it is far distant from the land of lyrics. In his latest and longest production, ‘Don Juan,’ he tells us that his ‘sere fancy has fallen ‘into the yellow leaf:’—

‘And the sad truth which hovers o’er my desk  
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.’

It was in ‘Beppo: a Venetian Story’ that he dropped, for the first time, the weapon of trenchant sarcasm and invective, with no very fine edge upon it, which he flourished in his youth, and took up the tone of light humorous satire upon society. He soon acquired mastery over the metre (which was suggested, as is well known, by Hookham Frere’s ‘Whistle-craft’); and in ‘Don Juan’ he produced a long, rambling poem of a kind never before attempted, and still far beyond any subsequent imitations, in the English language. Of a certainty there is much that it is by no means desirable to imitate, for the English literature does not assimilate the

element of cynical libertinism, which indeed becomes coarse on an English tongue. Yet it is remarkable that the Whistlecraft metre, although Byron could manage it with point and spirit, has never produced more than insipid *pastiche* in later hands. But while 'Beppo' may be classed as pure burlesque, 'Don Juan' strikes various keys, ironical and voluptuous, grave and gay, rising sometimes to the level of strenuous realistic narrative in the episodes of the shipwreck and the siege, falling often into something like grotesque buffoonery, with much picturesque description, many animated lines, and occasional touches of effective pathos. As a story it has the picaresque flavour of 'Gil Blas,' presenting a variety of scenes and adventures strung together without any definite plot; as a poem its reputation rests upon some passages of indisputable beauty; while Byron's own experiences, grievances, and animosities, personal or political, run through the whole performance like an accompaniment, and break out occasionally into humorous sarcasm or violent denunciations. That the overheated fervour of a stormy youth should cool down into disdainful irony, under the chill of disappointment and exhaustion, was natural enough; and this unfinished poem may be regarded as typical of Byron's erratic life, full of loose intrigue and adventure, with its sudden and premature ending.

It is in 'Don Juan' that Byron stands forth as the founder and precursor of modern realism in poetry. He has now finally exorcised the hyperbolic fiend that vexed his youth, he has cast off the illusions of romance, he knows the ground he treads upon, and his pictures are drawn from life; he is the foremost of those who have ventured boldly upon the sombre actualities of war and bloodshed:—

'But let me put an end unto my theme,  
 There was an end of Ismail, hapless town,  
 Far flashed her burning towers o'er Danube's stream,  
 And redly ran his blushing waters down.  
 The horrid warwhoop and the shriller scream  
 Rose still; but fainter were the thunders grown;  
 Of forty thousand that had manned the wall  
 Some hundreds breathed, the rest were silent all.'

'A versified paraphrase,' it may be said, 'of sober history,' yet withal very different from the most animated prose, which must be kept at a lower temperature of intense expression. If we turn to quieter scenes—which are called picturesque because the artist, like a painter, has selected the right subject and point of view, and has grouped his

details with exquisite skill—we may take the stanzas describing the return of the pirate Lambro to his Greek island—

‘He saw his white walls shining in the sun,  
His garden trees all shadowy and green’—

as a fine example of pure objective writing, which lays out the whole scene truthfully, with the direct vision of one who has seen it. One does not find here the suggestive intimations, the wide imaginative horizon of higher poetry; there are no musical blendings of sound and sense, as in such lines as Tennyson’s

‘By the long wash of Australasian seas.’

Yet in these passages Byron has after his own fashion served Nature faithfully, and he has preserved to us some masterly sketches of life and manners that have long since disappeared. The Greek islands have since fallen under the dominion of European uniformity; the costume of the people, the form of their government, are shabby imitations of Western models. But the cloudless sky, the sun slowly sinking behind Morea’s hills, the sea on whose azure brow Time writes no wrinkle, and the marbled steep of Sunium, are still unchanged; and the peaceful tourist in these waters will see at once that Byron was a true workman in line and colour, and will feel the intellectual pleasure that comes from accurate yet artistic interpretation of natural beauties.

The poem of ‘Don Juan’ is, therefore, a miscellany, connected on the picturesque side with ‘Childe Harold,’ and by its mocking spirit with ‘Beppo’ and the ‘Vision of Judgement,’ the two pieces that may be classed as pure burlesque. The irreverent persiflage of the ‘Vision’ belongs to the now obsolete school of Voltaire, and in biting wit and daring ridicule the performance is not unworthy of that supreme master in *diablerie*. Nor can it be asserted that this lashing sarcasm was undeserved, or that all the profanity was in Byron’s parody, for Southey’s conception of the Almighty as a High Tory judge, with an obsequious jury of angels, holding a trial of George III., browbeating the witnesses against him and acquitting him with acclamation, so that he leaves the court without a stain on his character, was false and abject enough to stir the bile of a less irritable Liberal than Byron. There exists, moreover, in the mind of every good English Whig a lurking sympathy with the Miltonic Satan, insomuch that all

subsequent attempts by minor poets to humiliate and misrepresent him have invariably failed. Southey's *Vision*, and Robert Montgomery's libel upon Satan, have each undergone the same fate of being utterly extinguished, knocked clean out of English literature by one single crushing onslaught, of Byron and Macaulay respectively.

Our conclusion must be brief, for in fact it is not easy to propound to the readers of this Review any general observations, which shall be new as well as true, upon a man's life and works that have been subjected to incessant scrutiny and criticism throughout the nineteenth century. At the beginning of this period Byron found himself matched, in the poetic arena, against contemporary rivals of first-class genius and striking originality. And from his death almost up to the century's close there has been no time when some considerable poet has not occupied the forefront of English letters, and stamped his impression on the public mind. Variety in style and ideas has produced many vicissitudes of taste in poetry; it has been discovered that narrative can be better done in prose, and so the novel has largely superseded story-telling in verse. There have also been great political and social changes, and all these things have severely tested the staying powers of a writer who is too closely associated with his own period to be reckoned among those wide-ranging spirits whom Shelley has called 'the kings of thought.' Nevertheless the new edition of Byron is appearing at a moment which is, we think, not inopportune. There is just now, as by a coincidence there was in the year 1800, a dearth of poetic production; we have fallen among lean years; we have come to a break in the succession of notable poets; the Victorian celebrities have one by one passed away; and we can only hope that the first quarter of the twentieth century may bring again some such bountiful harvest as was vouchsafed to our grandfathers at the beginning of the nineteenth. In the meantime the reading of Byron may operate as a wholesome tonic upon the literary nerves of the rising generation; for, as Mr. Swinburne has generously acknowledged, with the emphatic concurrence of Matthew Arnold, his poems have 'the excellence of sincerity and strength.' Now one tendency of latter-day verse has been toward that overdelicacy of fibre which has been termed decadence, toward the preference of correct metrical harmonies over distinct and incisive expression, toward vague indications of meaning. In this form the melody prevails over the matter; the

style inclines to become precious and garnished with verbal artifice. Some recent French poets, indeed, in their anxiety to correct the troublesome lucidity of their mother-tongue, have set up the school of symbolism, which deals in half-veiled metaphor and sufficiently obscure allusion, relying upon subtly suggestive phrases for evoking associations. For ephemeral infirmities of this kind the straightforward virility of Byron's best work may serve as an antidote. On the other hand, we have the well-knit strenuous verse of extreme realism, wrought out by a poet in his shirt-sleeves, with rhymes clear-sounding like the tap of hammer on anvil, who sings of rough folk by sea and land, and can touch national emotion in regard to the incidents or politics of the moment. He paints without varnish, in hard outline, avoiding metaphor and ornamental diction generally; taking his language so freely out of the mouths of men in actual life that he makes occasional slips into vulgarity. He is at the opposite pole from the symbolist; but true poetry demands much more distinction of style and nobility of thought. And here again Byron's high lyrical notes may help to maintain elevation of tone and to preserve the romantic tradition. His poetry, like his character, is full of glaring imperfections; yet he wrote as one of the great world in which he made for a time such a noise; and after all that has been said about his moral delinquencies, it is certain that we could have better spared a better man.

In one of Tennyson's earlier letters is the following passage, with reference to something written at the time in 'Philip van Artevelde':—

'He does not sufficiently take into consideration the peculiar strength evolved by such writers as Byron and Shelley, who, however mistaken they may be, did yet give the world another heart, and a new pulse, and so we are kept going. Blessed be those who grease the wheels of the old world.'

This is the large-hearted, far-seeing judgement of one who could survey the whole line and evolutionary succession of English verse, being himself destined to close the long list of nineteenth-century poets, which was opened by Byron and his contemporaries. The time has surely now come when we may leave discussing Byron as a social outlaw, and cease groping after more evidence of his misdeeds. The office of true criticism is to show that he made so powerful an impression on our literature as to win for himself permanent rank in its annals, and that his work, with all its shortcomings, does yet mark and illustrate an important stage in the connected development of our English poetry.



- ART. V.—1. *Hermann Ludwig Ferdinand von Helmholtz*. By JOHN GRAY M'KENDRICK, M.D. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1899.
2. *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik*. Von HERMANN VON HELMHOLTZ. Fünfte Ausgabe. Braunschweig: Vieweg und Sohn, 1896.
3. *On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music*. By HERMANN L. F. VON HELMHOLTZ. Second English Edition. By ALEX. J. ELLIS. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1885.
4. *Handbuch der physiologischen Optik*. Von HERMANN VON HELMHOLTZ. Zweite Auflage. Hamburg: Leopold Voss, 1896.
5. *Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen*. Von HERMANN HELMHOLTZ. Drei Bände. Leipzig: Johann Barth, 1882–1895.
6. *Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects*. By HERMANN VON HELMHOLTZ. Translated by E. Atkinson, Ph.D. Two Series. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1898.

SEVEN cities competed for the honour of having given birth to Homer; seven sciences claimed Helmholtz as an expert. So it was somewhat grandiloquently, yet not untruly, said by his panegyrist Engelmann. A rare width of compass belonged, indeed, to that master-mind. Versatile, in the ordinary sense, it was not. The researches of Helmholtz were not varied because of the shifting of the point of interest, but because of the elevation of the point of view. Their succession was by a logical sequence. Departments of knowledge, ordinarily separated, coalesced before his comprehensive glance. All, he could see, were involved in each; and seeing this, he had scarcely the choice of neglecting any. His powers were adequate to the demands made upon them by the largeness of his intelligence. He could explore in detail, as well as survey from a commanding height. His training, too, helped to amplify his range. A career imposed upon him by necessity not only led on to the career which he would have chosen by preference, but served as a peculiarly fortunate preparation for it, lending volume and strength to the flow of his mental progress.

Hermann Ludwig Ferdinand Helmholtz was born August 31, 1821, at Potsdam, where his father, Ferdinand

Helmholtz, taught languages and philology. On the mother's side, he was remotely but remarkably English. Caroline Penne, the wife of the 'Gymnasiallehrer,' was the daughter of a Hanoverian artillery officer, who traced his descent directly from William Penn of Pennsylvania. Hermann was a sickly child. For seven years his life hung by a thread, and his amusements were his only education. A box of bricks helped to implant geometrical principles; he read much and to the purpose, and special parental care quickened the play of his early thoughts. As he grew older, his father's judicious guidance safeguarded his rising activities against waste or blight. He had a fine memory for what pleased him, but disliked learning prose by rote. Poetry was wisely substituted. Homer and Horace were his favourites among the classics; he could repeat whole books of the 'Odyssey,' and a number of chiselled Latin odes; he cultivated, as well, German ballad-literature, and his facility for languages is shown by his perusal in Arabic of Lokmân's Fables at the age of twelve. Metaphysical ideas were not wanting: They emerged from certain cloudy symposia where Ferdinand Helmholtz discussed with his colleagues the systems of Kant and Fichte.

At school he astonished his teachers by mathematical intuitions unaccountable by heredity. No scientific leanings were traceable in his family. Spontaneously, too, he turned towards inquiries of the 'natural' order, seeking the 'magical 'key' (as he called it) that unlocks the gates of power by the knowledge of law. He devoured superannuated manuals unearthed from dusty bookshelves. He caused much housewifely dismay to his mother by experiments damaging to furniture and linen, he constructed optical apparatus with a few spectacle-glasses and a small botanical lens; and, while Cicero or Virgil was being read by his class at the gymnasium, devoted himself to drawing diagrams under the table, and solving problems relative to the paths of rays in telescopes. To find out the realities of things—this was his passion; and he looked forward, with the secret rapture of early youth, to a life which should be one untiring quest of new truth.

The bread-winning difficulty intervened. He was one of four children. His father, too poor to provide for them, could do no more than put them in the way of providing for themselves. The Friedrich-Wilhelms Institute of Berlin offered free medical education to students promising to take service as surgeons in the Prussian army; a bursarship was

available for Hermann; he accepted it in 1838, traversed the usual curriculum, and in due course obtained his diploma. Thus his status in the world was fixed for him, not selected by him. He was set upon a level track; his inner promptings were towards untried ways, leading to arduous heights. To these he ultimately attained, never having lost, as Dante once did, *la speranza dell' altezza*. He aimed throughout at embodying ideal aims in the hard material facts of life; and his history affords a singular example of gradual, almost inevitable reversion to inborn aspirations, not through the neglect, but through the strict fulfilment of duty.

His genius was in truth irrepressible. It possessed a hidden spring of vitality; like water lying lower than its source, it was always ready to mount to the light. Nor were the surrounding influences wholly adverse. A new breath was just then quickening German university life. The time had come, it began to be felt, to get science out of the rut of *a priori* conceptions, and on to the rails of definite fact. Hegel and Schelling had borne sway long enough; the fabric of abstract thought which, propped up by their authority, survived the demolition of its foundations, must at length collapse; Berlin could not for ever remain an isolated stronghold of speculation. It was difficult, Helmholtz said in his commemorative address on Gustav Magnus,\* to realise in 1871 the state of German science in the first two decades of the century. Recalling his boyish experiences:

‘When I began to study physics out of the school-books in my father’s possession, I still see before me the dark image of a series of ideas which now seems like the alchemy of the middle ages. Of Lavoisier’s and Humphry Davy’s revolutionary discoveries not much had got into the school-books. Although oxygen was already known, yet phlogiston, the fire-element, played also its part. Chlorine was still oxygenated hydrochloric acid; potash and lime were still elements. Invertebrate animals were divided into insects and worms; and in botany we still counted stamens.’

The permeation of foreign influences brought amendment to this state of things. Researches of the most approved modern type were, one after the other, executed by individual workers on the right bank of the Rhine. Chladni performed his classic experiments on vibrating plates; Seebeck discovered thermo-electricity in 1821; Ohm’s law

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\* Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, second series, p. 10, ed. 1898

was enounced in 1827; Ritter, Lenz, and Neumann studied fruitfully the characteristics of electric charges and electric currents. But the sense of progress was slow to make itself felt; 'shadows of the world,' flitting across the fairy mirror of introspection, were more regarded than actual phenomena. A definitive movement of minds set in only with the return from Paris of Mitscherlich, Liebig, and Humboldt. It triumphed conspicuously in Berlin, where Gustav Magnus occupied the Chair of Physics, and Johannes Müller the Chair of Physiology. Among the pupils of the former were Kirchhoff, Clausius, Siemens, and Wiedemann, while those of the latter included Du Bois Reymond, Brücke, and Helmholtz. All united in 1845 to found the Physical Society of Berlin. This was an event of no ordinary significance. It marked the uncompromising adoption, by German men of science, of experimental methods. Some even went too far in their exclusive reliance upon them. In the reaction against the syllogism, they were carried to the length of distrusting the calculus. For this, mathematicians themselves were partly to blame. They had attached more importance to the processes of computation than to the soundness of the underlying data, oblivious of the maxim that nothing is taken out of the mathematical mill except what is put into it; the grinding of truth out of error making no part of its function. Hence it came to pass that observation was pitted against reasoning, and sheer empiricism threatened to reign supreme. These exaggerated views were never shared by Helmholtz. His splendid mathematical abilities obtained full play later; they were never wholly in abeyance. His superiority in this respect placed him from the first in a rank apart from his classmates; and it became more striking as time went on. There was in him a rare faculty of developement; it was impossible to fix the length of his tether. Fulfilment, accordingly, outdid even his brilliant promise.

Less precocious than Clerk Maxwell, he was just twenty-two when he made his first original contribution to research. It resulted from an attack of typhoid fever in the autumn of 1841. As a medical student he was entitled to gratuitous nursing at the Charité Hospital, and on his recovery from the illness he consequently found himself in possession of some savings out of his small resources. He invested them in a microscope, with which he studied the conditions and effects of the presence of 'vibrions' in saccharine solutions. The upshot was a paper, proving up to the hilt Schwann's

conclusion, published in 1838, that fermentation, no less than putrefaction, results from the activity of minute living organisms. The experiments described in it demolished Liebig's oxygenation theory; they all but established Pasteur's final position.

Helmholtz was at this time stationed at Potsdam as assistant-surgeon to the Red Hussars. But his regimental service extended only over a few months. Alexander von Humboldt discerned his quality, and used his influence to procure him scientific occupation. He became in 1843 Professor of Physiology in the Albert University at Berlin, Lecturer on Anatomy to the Academy of Arts, and assistant in the Anatomical Museum. Organic nature seemed destined to engross him; and he was immediately attracted by a problem connected with the very springs of organic life.

Stahl's 'soul of life,' rationalised as the 'vital force,' survived essentially in the physiology of that day. Helmholtz 'had a misgiving,' he tells us,\* 'that there was something against nature in this explanation; but it took me a good deal of trouble to state my misgiving in the form of a definite question. I found ultimately, in the latter years of my career as a student, that Stahl's theory ascribed to every living body the nature of a *perpetuum mobile*. I was tolerably well acquainted with the controversies on this latter subject. In my school days I had heard it discussed by my father and our mathematical teachers, and while still a pupil at the Friedrich-Wilhelms Institute I had helped in the library, and in my spare moments had looked through the works of Daniel Bernoulli, D'Alembert, and other mathematicians of the last century. I thus came upon the question, "What relations must exist between the various kinds of natural forces for a perpetual motion to be possible?" and the further one, "Do those relations actually exist?"'

He was convinced they did not; but demonstration, not assertion, was needed, and he set himself to supply it. The phenomena of animal heat accordingly invited investigations, in the course of which he invented the 'myograph'—an instrument for obtaining the characteristic curves of contracting muscles self-inscribed on the blackened surface of a revolving cylinder. But this was, comparatively speaking, of minimal importance; the main outcome was an essay 'On the Conservation of Force,' designed merely as an arrangement and criticism of the facts for the benefit of physiologists, but in reality an irreversible pronouncement

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\* Autobiographical Sketch appended to second series of 'Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects,' p. 275.

affecting all branches of science. To Helmholtz himself it appeared that he had erred, if at all, by labouring self-evident arguments and planting batteries against breached walls; he found, with surprise, that he had incurred the opposite reproach of unmeasured wildness in speculation. Dissent from his views was almost unanimously expressed, Jacobi, the mathematician, alone adopting them; and Poggendorff refused them the countenance of publication in his celebrated '*Annalen*.' The paper was, however, read, July 23, 1847, before the Berlin Physical Society, the *radical* tendencies of which secured it a welcome. It created an European sensation. Yet the dynamical theory of heat was not, strictly speaking, a novelty. It had been propounded by Mayer of Heilbronn, by Colding of Copenhagen, and by Joule of Manchester. The great principle of the indestructibility of energy was virtually acquired to science before Helmholtz started independent inquiries on the subject. Its rapid and brilliant triumph was, however, due to him. His 'weighty statements,' Clerk Maxwell wrote,\* acted on other minds 'like an irresistible driving power.' He showed a light which it was impossible not to follow.

What did it mean, this new principle? Mass, or quantity of matter, was shown by Lavoisier to be unalterable. Accounts kept with the aid of the balance proved rigidly exact. The same weight of substance persisted throughout the most diversified series of experiments. Gaseous, liquid, or solid, fused or frozen, it remained constant in amount. It could be changed qualitatively, not quantitatively. The law demonstrated by Helmholtz was correlative to the law demonstrated by Lavoisier. Mass without energy is as unreal to experience as energy apart from mass. The energy of a body is its capacity for doing work, and augments with its motion. But motion may be either molar or molecular. It may affect matter in the lump, or interstitially. And the two kinds are reciprocally related. Motion arrested externally proceeds with rigorous equivalence internally. Every savage recognises the fact that heat is educed by friction; what savages do not recognise is that a definite amount of heat results from the employment of a certain quantity of effort in friction. Fundamentally, this was what Mayer, Joule, and Helmholtz demonstrated. They fixed the 'mechanical equivalent of heat.' Many developments ensued. It was ascertained further that 'the total energy

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\* *Nature*, vol. xv. p. 389.

‘ of any body, or system of bodies, is a quantity which can  
‘ neither be increased nor diminished by any mutual action  
‘ of these bodies, though it may be transformed into any of  
‘ the forms of which energy is susceptible.’\*

These forms are very various. Impeded motion can reassert itself, not only as heat, but as electricity, magnetism, chemical action, light, or sound. And always by calculable measure. In other words, energy can be transformed, not destroyed. This is not a necessary truth. It has been learned by experience, and therefore belongs to the empirical order. We can only say that every known fact harmonises with it. The severest tests have failed to impair its validity. Its importance, as Clerk Maxwell remarked, consists in its fertility. It may be relied upon as an unerring guide in devising experiments, in colligating facts, in constructing new methods. A very divining-rod for the springs of knowledge, it teaches how to locate investigation with the best chance of success. Its practical infallibility then assures us that it corresponds to the primary verities of things. Exceptions to the rule would be looked for in vain.

An application of this principle, memorable in the history of astronomical physics, was made by Helmholtz in 1854.† The maintenance of the sun’s heat was at that time an unsolved problem. The prodigious thermal output, by a minute fraction of which our globe is vivified, has been in progress, geological evidence assures us, during some millions of years. There must be a compensatory source of supply; where is it to be found? Various unsatisfactory answers had been given; Helmholtz, in a lecture before a popular audience at Königsberg, provided one that carried thorough and general conviction. He enunciated what is familiarly known as the ‘ shrinkage-theory ’ of solar heat. The sun necessarily contracts as it radiates. The wasting of heat secures a gradual victory for gravitation. Heat tends to diffusion, gravity to concentration; with the loss of heat, then, the central force must more and more effectually prevail. But by the very process of shrinkage heat is restored. A definite quantity is evolved by the fall, from a higher to a lower level, of each constituent particle. In other words, a certain proportion of its ‘ potential ’ energy is made available as ‘ actual ’ energy. Moreover, the

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Clerk Maxwell, ‘ Theory of Heat,’ tenth edition, p. 92.

† Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, series i. p. 169.

attendant reduction in the sun's dimensions would be for ages imperceptible to observation. It is computed that the drain of energy due to his copious emissions into space would be amply met by an annual shortening of his diameter to the extent of 250 feet—an amount bearing so insignificant a proportion to the whole that the effects, after ten thousand years, would be scarcely, if at all, discernible with our finest instruments. This, accordingly, is the sun's vital secret; it consists in the transformation into heat of motion persistently imparted by gravity. Here is the recuperative principle, apart from which his 'surpassing glory' would indeed be short-lived.

Recuperation, nevertheless, has limits. The sun's resources are enormous; they are not inexhaustible. The materials of the solar globe, in condensing from an indefinite degree of tenuity, have engendered, by Helmholtz's calculation,\* heat enough to support radiation at its present intensity during twenty-two million years; and it may last, through a continuation of the same process, without serious diminution, for about seventeen million future years. A total life-span of nearly forty million years was thus assigned, on purely mechanical grounds, to the ruler of our system. In forty millions years from the moment of primitive kindling, he will have passed from a nebulous to a nearly planetary condition—from gascity to partial solidification—from dim, all-pervading luminosity through the brilliant photospheric stage of concentrated superficial lustre to a dulled glow pre-luding final extinction.

These conclusions, although substantially unassailable, are naturally subject to qualifications in detail. Celestial chronologies are but loose estimates, based upon information likely to be defective in a thousand particulars. Their authority is on a par with that which might be claimed for dates in English history (for instance) deduced solely from the observed rate of some physical change. Thus the Norman Conquest might be fixed with reference to the submergence of the Goodwin Sands; the usurpation of Bolingbroke by the depth of salt water above the site of Ravenspur; and the reign of Elizabeth by noting the inroads of the sea on the south coast, and computing the number of years that must have elapsed since the old fishing village of Brighthelmstone was buried in the shingle. The limits of error would indeed be wide. And so, for analogous reasons,



are those within which the occurrence of cosmical events can be timed.

The views enunciated by Helmholtz were, however, independent of chronological accuracy. Their importance was due to the breadth of the novel prospects they embraced. The study of world-developement was by their introduction raised to a truly scientific status. A positive element was imported into discussions previously of a highly speculative character. The nebular hypothesis took rank as a definite and serviceable theory: not necessarily the nebular hypothesis under the form given to it by Laplace, but some modification of it. We may be said to know that the sun is growing smaller year by year; nor merely since yesterday. The fact is antique; the operation ceaselessly progressive. Travelling backward in thought, we find then his globe continually more distended; so that the time must have been when it filled the orbits of all the planets with inconceivably rare matter. Out of this primitive nebula—as it may fairly be designated—the solar system was somehow fashioned. The precise mode of its fashioning we are not here concerned to expound. The subject indeed bristles with difficulties, and no longer admits of the off-hand treatment which passed muster a century ago. What we seek to emphasise is that a nebular hypothesis of some kind makes part of the shrinkage-theory of solar heat. The two are so intimately related as to be inseparable. The earth and its sister-planets are warmed and illuminated to-day through the prolongation of the same series of developmental changes to which they owed their birth. And this conclusion applies universally. The principle of the conservation of energy governs all sidereal transformations. It affords a clue to stellar and nebular affinities. It guides speculation as to the relative ‘ages of the stars.’

There is another aspect under which it may be viewed. It prescribes, as we have just seen, the sun’s possible duration. He can no more keep on shining indefinitely than a steamer can run ‘for evermore’ without replenishing its bunkers. And every star within the circuit of the Milky Way is similarly circumstanced. Each has its allotted term of vitality which cannot be exceeded. What becomes, it may be asked, of their spent power? Energy cannot be annihilated. If one body parts with it, must not some other receive it, and so the beneficent play of cosmic interaction be maintained interminably? This is not assured to us. The energy of the universe, although constant in quantity,

may vary indefinitely in effectiveness. This depends upon the manner of its distribution. Now the developement of the heavenly bodies is conditioned by changes in the distribution of energy. Those more richly stored send their extra supplies abroad into space, until their superiority comes to an end. As we know by familiar experience, hot bodies cool down of themselves to the temperature of their surroundings. Thus, inequalities are perpetually in course of getting effaced; the universe, through the progress of what is known as the 'dissipation of energy,' tends to establish itself on a dead level. The attainment of such a state would, however, involve complete stagnation. Action of every kind would cease; the physical forces would lie paralysed; energy would not have been destroyed, but it would have been rendered useless for purposes of work. The universe would consist of a multitude of inert orbs, ruled inexorably by their mutual gravity. Such, according to Lord Kelvin's cheerless forecast, is the destiny in reserve for the great scheme of things. That it is justified by the facts of science, rigidly interpreted, cannot be denied; yet we suspect that something undreamt of in our philosophy will intervene to prevent the dismal consummation. The Maker of the machine can be trusted, it seems to us, to provide means for winding it up before it hopelessly runs down.

From the date of his essay on the 'Conservation of Energy' the name of Helmholtz became widely celebrated. As we have said, others were in the field before him, although he entered it by a way of his own. All found the gold; he minted it into current coin. Notwithstanding his disclaimers of priority, it went into circulation stamped with the impress of his genius. His appointment to the Chair of Physiology in the University of Königsberg ensued in 1849, and he was transferred thence, in a similar capacity, to Bonn in 1856, and to Heidelberg in 1859. Heidelberg was just then a sort of 'hub of the universe' in science; and the centre of the hub was a tall mansion at the west end of the Hauptstrasse, popularly known as 'Der Riese.' In its top story was the laboratory of Bunsen and Kirchhoff, where spectrum analysis took its effective origin, and the chemistry of the sun originated. Under its roof, Helmholtz analysed vowel-sounds, and his assistant, Wilhelm Wundt, gave demonstrations in the graphical registration of muscular contractions. On the ground-floor was the pupil's work-room, and Dr. Hugo Kronecker, who was one of them, describes the strained attention given by them to

Helmholtz's brief but stimulating instructions. He himself was on one occasion taught by him, with patient care, to fashion a myograph out of a cigar-box, some knitting-needles, cork, sealing-wax, and glass-plates.\* It was a long job, but, doubtless, a most remunerative one as regards technical training.

Dr. M'Kendrick remarks, in the useful little work named at the head of this article, that—

'Helmholtz did not, like many, lose time in doing second-rate work that others, perhaps, could have done better. His scientific instinct appeared to guide him often into what are termed virgin-fields. Thus he had the great satisfaction of collecting the first-fruits, and he usually gathered so well as to leave little for others who came after him. Hence the researches and discoveries that were announced in rapid succession were always epoch-making, and always in a special sense his own.' (P. 59.)

His first performance at Königsberg was the measurement of the transmission-rate of nervous impulses. It was generally regarded half a century ago as all but instantaneous. Johannes Müller despaired of its experimental determination. The conditions of the problem appeared to be such as to baffle any available method. Helmholtz solved it by the aid of an ingeniously devised 'myographion,' a small induction coil, and a frog's leg. The *batrachian* speed for motor action proved to be 90 feet a second, the *human* speed 115 to 130 feet. Sensory impressions are more difficult to manage. Their investigation demands the co-operation of an intelligent subject; it is hence practicable only in man. Modifying his arrangements accordingly, Helmholtz found that nervous stimulation travels to the brain at rates varying from 160 to 320 feet a second. Its velocity is increased by heat, diminished by cold, and changes with electrical conditions. Possibly it is different in different individuals, but we cannot agree with Dr. M'Kendrick that the phenomenon of 'personal equation' is referable to this cause. In Dr. Maskelyne's time an assistant lost his place at the Royal Observatory because he noted star-transits a second later than the Astronomer Royal. The defect was ineradicable: he could not hurry up his perceptions. Bessel in 1823 first recognised such diversities as a source of error to be eliminated from observations, and, by systematising, rendered them innocuous to

accuracy. They probably depend upon brain-quality, not upon nerve-conductivity.

‘In 1851,’ Dr. M’Kendrick tells us (p. 71), ‘Helmholtz conferred an inestimable benefit on humanity, and handed his name on to posterity, by the invention of the ophthalmoscope. Had he done little else in his long life-time, his name would never be forgotten; and yet the invention of this instrument took its origin, not in any profound investigation, but in the desire to exhibit a physiological phenomenon to his students.’

Here we meet one of the felicities of his mental constitution. Teaching is not to most men a stimulating pursuit. Rather it tends to cramp the originaive faculty, and to clip the wings of genius. Time devoted to it counts negatively, as a rule, in a career of research. Not so with Helmholtz. The process of imparting knowledge to others showed him how to seek it for himself. Between him and his pupils a sort of reciprocal action arose. Their intellectual needs were the beacons of his advance. Some of his largest inquiries and finest contrivances sprang from the fecund inspirations of the lecture-room. The search for means to expound ascertained truths set him upon the track of many previously unknown. As he himself said long afterwards:—

‘A teacher in a university is subject to excellent discipline, in that he is obliged each year, not only to give at least an outline of the whole of his science, but also to convince and satisfy the clear heads among his hearers, some of whom will be the great men of the next generation. This necessity was most beneficial to myself. In preparing my lectures, I was led to devise the method of measuring the velocity of the nervous impulse, and also to the conception of the ophthalmoscope. This instrument became the most popular of my scientific achievements; but good fortune, rather than any personal merit, favoured me in its invention.’

Cats’ eyes notoriously ‘shine in the dark,’ and so, in varying degrees, do the eyes of men and other animals. But no light is emitted by them. The property depends upon the presence of a reflective apparatus behind the lenses. Helmholtz turned it to account for the purpose of *seeing into* the eye. Delicate contrivances were needed; but his precise intuition of their nature, combined with iron perseverance, enabled him to realise them successfully. When Von Graefe, the great ophthalmologist, first surveyed the fundus of the living human eye, its optic disc and blood-vessels all distinctly visible, it is related that ‘his face flushed with excitement, and he cried, “Helmholtz

“has unfolded to us a new world. What remains to be ‘discovered?’”\* His enthusiasm was scarcely excessive. Diseases of the eye had until then been treated quite casually. No diagnosis of them was feasible. Now at last ophthalmic medicine assumed a scientific character, to the untold benefit of humanity. Charles Babbage seems to have very nearly anticipated Helmholtz in the invention of the ophthalmoscope. His instrument, shown privately to Wharton Jones, was, however, never brought to perfection.†

The publication of Helmholtz’s great work on ‘Physiological Optics’ occupied ten years (1856–1866). It embodied a surprising variety of novel and authentic results. The secret of visual accommodation was shown in it to consist in alterations of curvature in the crystalline lens, according to the distance of the objects viewed. Colour-sensation was largely treated of, the mechanism of binocular vision was laid bare, the causes of colour-blindness were discussed from the standpoint of specific nervous sensibility. As an optical physiologist Helmholtz was the direct successor of Thomas Young.

From light he proceeded to sound—from the study of the eye to the study of the ear. His treatise on ‘Tone-Sensations,’ published in 1863, revolutionised the subject. Lord Kelvin assigns to it ‘a unique position in the literature of philosophy.’‡ It includes, as he says, ‘mathematical and experimental investigations on the inanimate external influences concerned in sound, investigations of the anatomical structure of the ear in virtue of which it perceives sound, and applications to the philosophical foundation of the musical art.’ And Clerk Maxwell, in the Rede lecture for 1878, pronounced Helmholtz, ‘by a series of daring strides,’ to have ‘effected a passage over that untrodden wild between acoustics and music—that Serbonian bog where whole armies of scientific musicians and musical men of science have sunk.’§

He had rare qualifications for the enterprise. That inner sense for music which the abstrusest speculations cannot give, and which ‘roasting in sulphur’ cannot remove, was his by nature; he took double-first rank as a physicist and physiologist; his experimental instinct was sure; and he had a reserve of mathematical power that lent impetus to

\* M’Kendrick, loc. cit. p. 83.

† *Ibid.* p. 77.

‡ Proc. R. Society, vol. lvii. p. 40.

§ Life of Maxwell, Campbell and Garnett, p. 363.

every movement of his mind. Yet his attempt to bridge the gap between science and art had but a scanty measure of success. No one, however, doubts that the enjoyment of music is based on sensations of the simplest kind, and of these Helmholtz found the true physiological explanation. He showed that discords offend the ear through an actual *roughness* of the vibrations producing them, very much as a harsh surface grates upon the touch. The obnoxious effect is due to sub-audible 'beats,' resulting from the interference of the dissonant notes or their overtones. The nerves are distressed by an uncomfortable feeling of discontinuity; they demand the repose of the smooth flow given by harmonious combinations.

But this rationale of discords and concords does not touch the real problem of æsthetic preferences. Rising out of the material relations of music there is something that transcends them. For the divine enters into everything that is human. This supernal element mingles with our pleasure in listening to the commonest folk-tune; it confronts us in the poignant pathos of Millet's 'Angelus,' in the haunting sadness of Tennyson's 'Down the Valley of 'Cauterets;,' it overwhelms us in great architecture, in the Hallelujah Chorus, in the 'Tannhäuser' overture. Yet it evades, and must always evade, analysis; the progress of science can bring us no nearer to a knowledge of its essence. On this point Helmholtz was under no delusion. 'These 'phenomena of agreeableness of tone,' he remarked, 'as 'determined solely by the senses, are of course merely the 'first step towards the beautiful in music.' And he rose to enthusiasm in describing how 'the stream of sound' carries with it 'into the hearer's soul unimagined moods 'which the artist has overheard from his own, and finally 'raises him up to that repose of everlasting beauty of which 'God has allowed but few of His elect favourites to be the 'heralds.' \*

The detection of the part assignable to 'beats' in music was, however, only one of his many contributions to physiological acoustics. His investigation of vowel-sounds was a masterpiece. His predecessors, Wheatstone, Willis, and Donders, had shown their connexion with the varied developement of overtones; Helmholtz gave the clinching proof, spoke the ultimate word on the subject. Following up analysis with synthesis, he decomposed the human voice,

by means of his 'resonators,' into its elementary tones, then reproduced the different vowels by combinations of tuning-forks, each representing a constituent vibration. Further, the whole question of 'timbre' (*Klangfarbe*) was first exhaustively treated by him. Pure tones he found to be as difficult of reproduction as pure colours. One set of sound-waves is superposed upon another; the main disturbance starts half a dozen minor ones, and the diversified groups thus formed strike the ear as differences of quality, the actual corresponding objective fact being the variety in shape of the compound wave, resulting from the amalgamation of many simple waves of sundry periods. Hence the dissimilarity in effect between notes of the same pitch on the violin and flute, on the piano, the harp, or the human voice. The apparatus used by Helmholtz in these curious inquiries was supplied by Maximilian, King of Bavaria. Expenses were involved far beyond the modest means of a university professor.

The book he was royally aided to prepare appeared in an English translation by Mr. A. J. Ellis in 1875. Its merits can scarcely be exaggerated. It is many-sided, far-reaching, profound. We have done no more than pick out a few specimens from the stores of knowledge it contains. Nevertheless, its express purpose was not attained. The author adventured in it to interpret art-theories from the side of natural science.\* They undeniably remained *in statu quo*. For this purpose the mechanism of the ear was vainly explored. The marvels of aural anatomy help in no way to elucidate questions connected with musical form or musical expression; it signifies nothing, as regards them, whether or no vibrators exist in the cochlea, what may be the function of the 'basilar membrane,' or how Corti's 'lyre of three 'thousand strings'† is concerned in transmitting the impulses of the air. All that can be said is that, by the sagacity and thoroughness of the research, the 'so far and 'no farther' was prescribed to the ambition of expounding art on the basis of sensation.

The Chair of Physics at Berlin became vacant by the death of Magnus, March 4, 1871. The choice of a successor to him lay between Kirchhoff and Helmholtz, and Kirchhoff was retained at Heidelberg by Grand Ducal authority. Helmholtz was then the inevitable man for the post. Yet

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\* Einleitung, October 1862.

† Tyndall, *Lectures on Sound*, p. 409.

he hesitated to accept it. The exchange of the wooded banks of the Neckar for the muddy shores of the Spree was unwelcome to him, and he was impelled to make it only, it is said, by the prevision that the practice of vivisection would be, in a manner, forced upon him if he continued in the physiological line. This was the turning-point of his career. Until then he had been officially a physiologist, incidentally a physicist. Thenceforward he professed physics, thus realising at the age of fifty his juvenile aspirations. He occupied the chair of Magnus to the end, but added to his professorial duties in 1887 others of a more onerous character. In that year the Physico-Technical Institute, endowed by Werner von Siemens, was founded by the German Government at Charlottenburg. Helmholtz became its first director. He rose to the occasion by displaying a completely new range of faculties. His administrative abilities proved to be of a high order. A large staff obeyed his instructions; an extensive organisation depended upon his guidance. He regulated its working with a commanding insight, a grasp of details, a steady patience, and an invincible firmness which were equally beyond praise and expectation.

Nor did his original labours suffer interruption. Only their scope was modified. They were now directed chiefly to electrical and hydro-dynamical topics, the treatment of which at last brought to the front his vast mathematical resources. Occasional excursions into these territories he had already made. At Königsberg, in 1851, he determined the duration of induced electrical currents, as a parergon to his researches on nervous conductivity. In 1869 he published an account of some experiments on electrical oscillations, and fixed, in 1871, a lower limit for the propagation-rate of electro-magnetic induction. His further contributions to the science were numerous and varied. In the Faraday lecture delivered by him at the Royal Institution, April 5, 1881, he sounded their *Leitmotiv*. 'The great fundamental 'problem,' he said, 'which Faraday called up anew for discussion, was the existence of forces working directly at a 'distance, without any intervening medium.' Its solution was the primary object Helmholtz had in view. Did a medium veritably exist? Was electrical action carried on intelligibly by means of stresses and strains in a real although intangible substance, or unintelligibly, magically, across void space? Long and laborious investigations finally satisfied him that Faraday's divinatorial instinct had guided



him to the truth—that as regards electrical processes the root of the matter is in the medium. The manner of its constitution is another and a still more subtle question, which he did not pretend to answer; but he set on foot suggestive inquiries as to its relations with ponderable matter, thus preparing the way for that complete theory of them which science demands from the future.

The novel idea of 'electrical convection' originated with Helmholtz in 1876. It means that the bodily transport of a charged conductor has the same effect as a current through a stationary conductor. The experimental proof of this equivalence was wrought out in Helmholtz's laboratory by Henry Rowland, of Baltimore, eminent as a solar spectroscopist. 'Convection' promises to be of vital importance in new views about magnetisation. The extension to electro-dynamics of the mechanical principle of 'least action' came later. It was achieved in a series of papers, beginning in 1886, and closing with his final communication to the Berlin Academy, June 14, 1894. Another, and not the smallest, of Helmholtz's services to electrical science was indirectly rendered. For it was he that inspired the labours of Heinrich Hertz. Hertz was his favourite pupil. 'I have ever regarded him,' he wrote after his early death, 'as the one who had penetrated furthest into my own circle of scientific thought, and it was to him that I looked with the greatest confidence for the further developement and extension of my work.\*' By a prize question, proposed in 1879, Helmholtz deliberately set Hertz upon the track which led to his great discovery of electrical ether-waves, and he reported on it to the Academy in 1888, in highly impressive terms, and with a countenance glowing with satisfaction. Few deplored his loss more keenly. He saw in him, as it were, typified, 'the victory of the soul over the opposing powers of nature.' 'In him we found all the qualities required for the solution of the hardest problems in science. Heinrich Hertz appeared predestined to disclose new vistas into the unpenetrated depths of nature; but all these hopes were crushed by the insidious disease which destroyed the life we esteemed so valuable.'

He was nearing his own end when he wrote these lines. Hertz died on the first, Helmholtz did not live to see the last day of 1894.

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\* Helmholtz, preface to Hertz's 'Principles of Mechanics,' translated by Jones and Walley. 1899.

His promotion of dynamical knowledge consisted first in giving the widest possible application to the principle of least action, next and most conspicuously in his researches on vortex motion in fluids. Here he struck a rich lode overlooked even by Lagrange. So far only a small part of its contents has been brought to light; yet it sufficed to alter profoundly our conceptions of nature. The results obtained by Helmholtz were employed by Lord Kelvin in his 'vortex-ring' theory of matter; from them Professor Fitzgerald evolved a 'vortex-sponge' hypothesis of the ether. Neither probably corresponds closely with actual facts, but each represents an intrepid attempt to scale an eminence. It was at any rate shown that ultimate atoms might be absolutely unlike Dalton's hard, round entities, arbitrarily assumed to be indivisible. Ideas respecting them acquired elasticity and variety, and an untrodden field of possibilities was seen to stretch away to an indefinite horizon.

Helmholtz left his mark in passing, so to speak, upon meteorology. He not only lectured on water-spouts, and traced out mathematically the movements of the air, but originated what may be termed the wave-theory of cloud-formation. It was suggested to him by the spectacle of a great floccular area lying beneath and around the Righi-Kulm. The oceanic analogy was obvious; and as ocean-waves are raised by the friction of wind with water, so it might plausibly be inferred that atmospheric waves must be generated by the gliding, one over the other, of air-strata, differing in density because of their different temperatures. Then, with the lifting of each crest, a condensation of aqueous vapour would, under favourable circumstances, ensue. Considerable support has been lent to this rationale by observations from balloons; and it has lately been transplanted to solar physics with a view to solving the enigma of the photospheric cloud-shell.

Among other topics treated of by the 'Admirable Crichton' of modern science\* were the 'anomalous dispersion' of light, tidal friction, glacier-motion, aeronautics, human locomotion. He threw out the idea of cigar-shaped balloons; and, from telescopic observations at his laboratory window, of pedestrians in the streets of Königsberg, detected several mistakes made by Weber in his analysis of the movements of the limbs. His corrections were long afterwards verified by instantaneous photography. As a more serious task, he

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\* Rücker, Lecture at the Royal Institution, March 8, 1895.

improved the theory of the microscope, and fixed the *minimum visible* at the  $\frac{1}{25000}$  of an inch. The limitation is due to diffraction, or the shattering of the light-waves at the edges of the objects under scrutiny. Helmholtz ascribed to geometrical axioms merely an experiential value, and he was one of those who keep an open mind regarding the number of dimensions in space.

As a popular lecturer, Helmholtz has never been surpassed. He had indeed, in Germany, the arena almost to himself, the dignity of science, as it seemed to most of his contemporaries, requiring its seclusion within the halls of universities. Its wide diffusion struck him, on the contrary, as a prime desideratum. His expositions were not of the facile kind. Admirably lucid, they were, none the less, pitched too high for the purpose of simple intellectual diversion. They demanded, and amply deserved, sustained attention. He drew his audience, as has been well said, up to his level, instead of letting himself down to theirs.\* Hence his discourses were of lasting value. They could afford to dispense with the charm of the spoken word. They appealed to deliberate readers quite as effectively as to cultivated hearers. They belong, in short, to the best class of general scientific literature. Their circulation in print has, accordingly, been very large. They were issued in two series, extending over thirty-seven years; and the final address, delivered on the occasion of his Jubilee in 1891, has a special interest from its autobiographical character. The title of the latest English edition is included among the headings to this article.

Helmholtz married in 1849 Olga von Velten, of Potsdam. She died in 1859, leaving a son and daughter. Both survive. The former is an engineer at Munich, the latter became the wife of Dr. Branco, the Suabian geologist. Another son and daughter were the offspring of a second marriage contracted in 1861 with Anna von Mohl, a lady of high position in Würtemberg. Great hopes were entertained of a brilliant future for Robert von Helmholtz. His career seemed likely to furnish a worthy sequel to his father's; but he died in 1889, when scarcely seventeen years of age, his renown 'unfulfilled.' The daughter married a son of Werner von Siemens.

Helmholtz led a quiet domestic life, enlivened by the sedate gaiety of thronged musical receptions. The best

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\* Kronecker, 'The Electrician,' August 28, 1891.

artists in Berlin esteemed it an honour to perform at his house; and he himself sang tastefully, and played Bach's fugues on a magnificent piano, presented to him by the Steinways of New York in recognition of his services to musical art. He was a frequenter, too, of the Bayreuth Festivals, and usually proceeded thence to the Engadine, where he revelled in Alpine scenery and cogitated over Alpine problems. His first trip to this country, in 1854, was in many ways memorable to him.

'England,' he wrote to his friend Carl Ludwig, 'is a great land, and one feels there what a magnificent thing civilisation is, and how the minutest conditions of life bear its impress. In comparison with London, Berlin and Vienna are mere villages. To describe London is impossible; it must be seen with one's own eyes before one can attempt to form an estimate of it. A visit to London marks an epoch in one's life; after such a visit, one learns to judge human actions on a scale hitherto unknown.'\*

Three weeks' sight-seeing were not enough—according to his strenuous view of his duty as a tourist—to show him half the big town; but he met Faraday, Stokes, Sabine, Grove, Airy, Andrews, Rowan Hamilton, stayed with Bence Jones at Folkestone, where he picked up his early associate, Du Bois Reymond, and attended the meeting of the British Association at Hull. He then—

'Spent eight days in Scotland, to feast on nature. Edinburgh,' he continues, 'is a jewel among cities. The Scotch Highlands have a peculiar majesty, from their proximity to the Atlantic Ocean; but they are, on the whole, barren and monotonous, and not to be compared with the Alps. I saw Fingal's Cave in beautiful weather, then unceasing rain compelled me to return. I travelled home *via* Hull and Hamburg, and arrived with a very empty purse.'

With Lord Kelvin he formed subsequently a close and lasting friendship, and was often hospitably received by him at Glasgow. An eavesdropper with a phonograph might surreptitiously have made a fortune by recording their conversations; but none, to the world's loss, was at hand. We may be sure that they left no stone of the cosmos unturned in their eager search for truth.

Imperial favours were freely bestowed upon this illustrious German. The Emperor William admitted him to private colloquies; the ennobling preposition was added to his *bourgeois* name in 1883; he was on terms of intimacy with the Crown Prince and Princess (the present Empress

Frederick); and William II. wrote him an autograph letter of congratulation on his seventieth birthday. This anniversary gave the signal for a demonstration with few parallels in professorial annals. Learned societies showered distinctions upon him; diplomas arrived by the dozen; addresses were voted, panegyrics recited. A Helmholtz medal was struck, and awarded to him as the leader and exemplar of future recipients. Oratory and a banquet emphasised the celebration, and his bust by Hildebrand was unveiled amid enthusiastic plaudits. It was a national festival. Yet the *Hochs!* of the Fatherland only led a chorus of applause that re-echoed 'from Tomsk to Melbourne.' Foreign potentates sent insignia; appreciations were published in foreign languages; Berlin was crowded with foreign emissaries, the representatives of kings, academies, and universities.

The hero was worthy of the ovation: not only for what he had done, but for the way in which he had done it. His name is connected with no acerbities of controversy; he did his best in serene superiority to questions of priority, or the possibility of national emulations. His acquaintance was an education. Many, in coming to know him, must have sub-consciously experienced the truth of what he said, recalling the effect of his own introduction, in early youth, to Johannes Müller: 'Contact with a man of the first order 'alters for life the entire scale of intellectual conception.' Entirely without pretension, he was impressive through innate nobility and strength. None could take him for less than he was.

'Rather above the middle stature,' Dr. M'Kendrick writes,\* 'he had a firm, erect frame. His splendid head was well thrown back, so that his posture was always sure to command attention. The shape of the head was perfect, broad between the eyes, but not out of proportion. The eyes were full of intelligence, not so brilliant as deep and reflective. They often had that far-away look so conspicuous in thinkers, as if the soul were away on its own quest. His manner was dignified, almost to coldness, but it was at the same time courteous. It is said that he had occasionally a peculiar look that caused a shallow man to stop asking questions, and to feel his own unworthiness. With those who were truly in earnest he would take infinite pains to explain, listen to suggestions, and remove difficulties. Reserve was his habitual attitude. To his favourite students, and in the circle of his own friends, there was always the charm of a great personality.'

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\* H. F. L. von Helmholtz, p. 283.

At Leipzig in 1872, during a performance of Mendelssohn's music to 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' Dr. M'Kendrick first caught sight of him. He noticed near the orchestra a head of splendid proportions, with a rapt expression in the eyes as the fairy strains floated through the Gewandhaus. 'That *must* be Helmholtz!' he thought. And it was. A few days later, he was received by him in his laboratory.

Helmholtz attended the Edinburgh meeting of the British Association in 1892, and presided over the International Electrical Congress at Chicago in 1893. This was his last excursion. On the homeward voyage he was seized with giddiness, and fell down the cabin-stairs. Concussion of the brain resulted, from which he never thoroughly recovered. The work that had been his delight became a weariness; apoplexy supervened, and he died September 8, 1894, aged seventy-three. His head, examined by Professor Hausemann, proved to be 59 centimetres in circumference. That is to say, it was smaller than Wagner's, considerably larger than Darwin's, and about the size of Bismarck's. The brain weighed 1,700 grammes, or 100 grammes more than the average.

Helmholtz was indefatigable in self-criticism and self-correction. Some parts of his memoirs were re-written five or six times before he could be content to let them leave his hands. Nor were his discoveries easily attained. He took his turn in the treadmill of patient toil, waiting for illuminations often long delayed. 'But who,' he asked,\* 'can count 'or measure such mental flashes? Who can follow the 'hidden tracts by which conceptions are connected?' Nevertheless, he was characteristically attentive to the mode of their arrival.

'Lucky ideas,' he said, 'often steal into the line of thought without their importance being at first understood; then afterwards some accidental circumstance shows how and under what conditions they originated; they are present, otherwise, without our knowing whence they came. In other cases they occur suddenly, without exertion, like an inspiration. As far as my experience goes, they never come at the desk, or to a tired brain, but often on waking in the morning, or when ascending woody hills in sunny weather. The smallest quantity of alcoholic drink,' he added, 'seemed to frighten them away.'

His vigour was not of the intellect alone. In the moral

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\* 'Autobiographical Sketch,' Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, series ii. p. 283.

order, too, he recognised the supreme necessity for struggle and self-conquest. He pursued, of set purpose, ideal aims. He was noble, not by casual impulse, but because he deliberately chose to sacrifice petty instincts to an 'ever-lastingly sacred' highest good.

Three representative figures stand out as the chief agents in the revolutionary progress of physical science during the second half of the nineteenth century. They are those of Clerk Maxwell, Helmholtz, and Lord Kelvin. All bore the stamp of universality distinctive of greatness. They had the largest qualifications, but they could not be specialists. In each, experimental sagacity was allied to great mathematical power; and hence their continuation of what Faraday had begun had a sureness and authority to which the results obtained by Faraday's own initiatory efforts could lay no claim. The upshot was to change essentially the prevalent conception of nature and of natural forces. A more *plastic* idea of the universe came to be entertained. Let us explain. Attention is now less concentrated on matter as such than formerly. Its relations to the medium occupy the foreground of thought. That medium—the 'luminiferous ether' looked askance at until the other day—at present fascinates and defies investigators. It links the world together; it is the common vehicle of energy. It is conspicuous to the mind, while elusive to the senses. Its negative properties are no less enigmatical than its positive attributes. The possibility, however, is dawning upon many minds that it may be the very bed-rock of creation. 'Let there be Light!' implied an antecedent 'Let there be ether!' visible things bodying themselves forth, at the word, from the invisible. Hence the significance of the 'vortex-atom' hypothesis, the author of which, we are happy to think, is still at hand to help on its future developement. That it symbolises a verity, rather than states a fact, must be our present verdict upon it; yet it is more than a beautiful concept of the scientific imagination. It is symptomatic of the modern tendency to establish unity, to detect continuity, to educe one order of things from another. Thus the principle of the transformation of energy has acted like a leaven on the whole mass of knowledge, levelling barriers, widening prospects, and preparing the way for more radical changes and more extensive generalisations. And each premonition of a higher unity in the world of phenomena cannot but serve as an approximation to that Supreme Unity which is hidden behind phenomena as the abiding Truth.

ART. VI.—1. *Report from the Joint Select Committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons on Municipal Trading.* London: 1900.

2. *Journal of the Society of Arts.* Vol. xlvii. London: George Bell & Sons, 1899.

3. *Municipal Finance and Municipal Enterprise.* The annual address of the Right Hon. Sir HENRY HARTLEY FOWLER, President of the Royal Statistical Society.

4. *Municipal Government in Continental Europe.* By ALFRED SHAW. New York: The Century Company, 1897.

IT is to be regretted that the Parliamentary Committee on Municipal Trading were unable to conclude their labours before the end of the last Session of Parliament, and were only in a position to report the minutes of evidence taken before them and recommend their reappointment next year. The Committee was a joint Committee of both Houses of the Legislature, a body which has been growing, and rightly growing, in favour in recent years, and has become recognised as a weighty tribunal capable of expressing a mature and well-balanced opinion of the Legislature upon any question submitted to it. The Committee in this instance was a strong one. Lord Crewe presided; and no one who reads the evidence carefully can fail to appreciate the care and the intelligence which he bestowed on the examination of the important witnesses who came before him. The other members of the House of Lords were Lords Hampden, Peel, Windsor, and Rothschild, all of whom have proved business capacity in varying spheres of useful public work. The members appointed by the House of Commons were Sir Leonard Lyall (for whom was later substituted Sir William Dunn), Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Lewis Fry, and Mr. Hobhouse, men of experience and mark, forming with their colleagues a tribunal well able to take a broad and philosophic as well as a practical view of a question involving considerations of principle as well as detail, and of usefully influencing Parliamentary procedure in a matter of much interest both to our great municipalities and to the public at large.

The appointment of the Committee was at one time opposed, and in many quarters has been condemned, as pointing to a disposition on the part of the Legislature to mistrust and check municipal enterprise. We do not think this view well founded. Neither House has shown, nor is



there to be found in the evidence of the departmental officers examined before the Committee, any desire to hinder the legitimate growth of the work of great local corporations. On the contrary, more than one opinion was expressed by witnesses, competent to form a judgement, of the ability with which affairs properly entrusted to municipal councils are conducted. The appointment of the Committee was more probably due to a feeling that Parliament required some guidance from within as regards a somewhat rapid extension of the matters with which corporations and some councils seek to deal within their own area, and as regards the conditions under which these bodies should be allowed and encouraged to operate without their own area.

The truth is that Parliament and the country are proud of our system of local government, and have confidence in those who conduct it. But both also appreciate the immense debt which is owed to individual enterprise and the importance of doing nothing to impair its opportunities. Great as have been the services of State bodies, whether central or local, our civilisation and our national well-being have been largely helped by the energy and resource of private persons, and it would be an evil policy to discourage the investment of British capital in local concerns. The extreme advocates of Socialism may indeed say, and probably really think, that the State can do everything better than the individual, and base their policy chiefly on the argument that the State has no private interests to serve, no shareholders to consider. But, on the other hand, Socialism has all the disadvantages inherent in monopolies, and there is ample room for the work of both elective bodies and of individuals acting alone or in partnership. The problem to be solved is how best each can be made to help the other. And to this solution the joint Committee may be relied on, when it finally reports, to afford a valuable contribution. Meanwhile we propose to consider how far any distinguishing line can be drawn between those matters which can best be entrusted to municipalities and those which may safely be left to private enterprise, and whether there are any conditions which may properly be imposed on either in the general interests of the community.

The *raison d'être* of municipal authority is the need of good management of provincial areas in matters outside the province of the central government. Thus the administration of local justice, including police; the care of the public health of the district; the provision and management of

thoroughfares, of buildings to be used for the public requirements of the inhabitants, of public educational establishments, and of markets and of public baths, were duties early entrusted to municipal councils, as clearly essential to their exercise of powers of wise government. But even here there was no ousting of private schools, or private wash-houses or baths. The value of individual enterprise was recognised, and opportunities for its exercise safeguarded. Even later, when there was devolved upon the municipalities the duty of supplying light and water, the rights of private supply were kept in view, and so late an Act as the Borough Funds Act of 1872 explicitly abstained from authorising the promotion of Bills in Parliament for the establishment of gas or water works to compete with any existing statutory supply.

It may be said with a great degree of accuracy that the duty of municipal bodies was in their inception limited to the supply of essentials. But the difference between what is essential to the well-being of a citizen of so complicate a community as ours, and what is desirable only, is very difficult to define; and the difficulty has been proved by experience to be so great that vast extension of municipal enterprise has grown up in matters closely affecting, but not logically essential to, the welfare of the inhabitants. Thus water and light are clearly essentials, locomotion is not. As regards locomotion, therefore, Parliament for a long time was content to trust more to private enterprise than to the labours of corporations. Our great railways owe little to municipal aid; our systems of omnibuses and of coaches even less. For many years after the inception of tramways the Legislature discouraged municipal ownership of tramways, and sternly opposed municipal working thereof. For long after the passing of the general statute of 1870 dealing with tramways, the only municipality having authority to own and work tramways in its district was Glasgow. But many circumstances led to acquisition of tramway systems by municipalities, and once the principle of ownership was conceded, the right to work could not long be resisted. For unless municipal owners of tramways have power to work, it is obvious that they are more or less at the mercy of possible lessees. The corporation could not afford to let the tramways remain idle, and were, therefore, hampered in obtaining a fair price for the right to work. For some time an attempt was made at a compromise, and

leave was given to municipalities to work their tramways provided that they proved to the satisfaction of a State Department that they were unable to lease at a fair price. But the Parliamentary arrangement embodied in what was known as the Huddersfield clause did not work very well, and for the last few years Parliament has abandoned its opposition to working and acquiesced in the gradual passing of the tramways into the hands of local authorities.

There is much advantage in this system, for the control of tramways remains in the hands of the bodies seised with the management of the roads, and with the power of policing the traffic. Thus there is no conflict, and the comfort and convenience of the public as well as their safety can be looked after by one authority and without friction. Of its disadvantages we shall say something when we come to deal with the operations of municipalities outside their own area. It suffices for the moment to point out that the principle of entrusting full control of tramways in their district to municipal bodies is now fully admitted by Parliament and is not likely to be altered. This is not the case as regards omnibuses and hackney carriages. Local authorities have not hitherto been allowed to establish these, and though logically any such difference between a system of tramways and a system of omnibuses\* as would justify the municipal acquisition of the one without justifying the municipal acquisition of the other is not easy to lay down, public opinion supports the distinction, and the private ownership of omnibuses and hackney carriages is not seriously assailed.

We have said that light is an essential. Because it is so, public lighting has been with very few exceptions invariably entrusted to local authorities. But the right of individuals to undertake private lighting has been as fully recognised. In the Metropolis the whole of the gas supply is in the hands of private companies, the public authorities contracting with them for what is necessary. In the provinces there are 222 systems of municipal supply and 439 systems of private supply. When electrical energy became available as a means of lighting, Parliament at once provided a system by which statutory authority could be obtained by either local authorities or private companies to distribute the energy required. The Board of Trade, to which department was

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Municipal omnibuses have been allowed in a few cases to work at the dead ends of tramways.

entrusted the duty of preparing the necessary provisional orders and submitting them for Parliamentary confirmation, have usually acted on the principle of giving preference to a local authority over a company where both apply, but there is nothing either in the statute itself or in the procedure of Parliament which gives municipal corporations a monopoly or discourages private enterprise. The House of Commons indeed on a comparatively recent occasion declined to give a metropolitan vestry power to compete with a company already established, even though it was shown that there was public demand for such competition. And with electricity as with gas Parliament seems to adhere to the position that it will not favour rate-aided competition with invested capital, or allow a municipality to undertake supply when a company has provided an installation, and is distributing from it.

On the other hand, the Legislature refuses to grant an unlimited concession to private companies. Their tenure of the Parliamentary privilege of supply, which was twenty-one years under the Act of 1882, is limited to forty-two years under the Act of 1888. At the end of that time the municipalities have an option of purchase, free practically from any obligation to pay for goodwill. Eventually, therefore, it may be contemplated that the whole supply of electrical energy for lighting purposes will be in the hands of local authorities. Thus it is clear that as regards water, light, and to some extent locomotion, the State has encouraged municipal action, which is gradually occupying the whole of the field to the exclusion of private enterprise.

Before passing from this portion of the subject we may point out that there are two broad lines of policy on which municipalities may act in regard to this portion of their work. They may conduct the management of water, gas, and tramways with a view solely to cheapness, or they may conduct it with a view to profit. The town-clerk of Birmingham, an officer of great ability and experience, told Lord Crewe's Committee that in Birmingham the policy as initiated by Mr. Chamberlain, and continued from the date of his mayoralty, was to make no profit out of water, but to make profit out of gas, on the ground apparently that water was a necessity of life, and that a good supply was essential to the sanitary welfare of the inhabitants. The corporation has continued to make profit out of gas even though the price was reduced by a shilling between 1875 and 1900. The temptation to make profit is, we

suspect, too great to be resisted by local authorities generally, having regard to the very natural desire felt by mayors and town councils for either improvement of their borough, or diminution of the calls upon its inhabitants.

On this point the evidence of the Lord Provost of Glasgow is important. He expressed the opinion that the application of profits to the relief of the general rate would be dangerous. The temptation to starve an enterprise in order to set aside a sum for reduction of rate would act injuriously to the ratepayers. The merger of all the enterprises conducted by a corporation into one fund would not lead to efficiency of management; for there would be grave loss of stimulus if the manager of one enterprise understood that if he made a loss it would be recouped by a surplus from another. Lastly and not least, the reduction of rates is not clearly for the benefit of the whole body of ratepayers. If rates are reduced by municipal profits the landlords would simply increase the rental, and the benefit would go into one class of pocket, and not benefit the public at all.\* These considerations lead the Corporation of Glasgow to apply the profits of each undertaking to that undertaking. But the principle so followed is by no means of universal application, and many of the more important municipalities do apply profit to reduction of rates or the relief of other corporate expenditure.

In connexion with the sanitary administration of their districts local authorities are authorised to provide slaughter-houses, cemeteries and burial-grounds, baths and wash-houses, and markets. These may be regarded as more closely connected with government than with trading, and to be more or less beyond cavil even by pronounced foes of State interference. Less free from question is the operation of those local authorities who supply artisans' dwellings or common lodging-houses. Lord Avebury, in his evidence, quoted some observations made by Lord Rosebery at the opening of some workmen's dwellings erected in Shoreditch. In that case the number of persons dispossessed by the scheme was 533 and the number of houses erected 472. Thus more individuals were rendered homeless than were ultimately provided for. Lord Rosebery pointed out that the inhabitants of the new dwellings were not the inhabitants dispossessed; and it is also clear that, if the rent which the incoming tenants are willing to pay is accepted, the result is that the class housed would be in a higher or more highly

remunerated sphere of life than the people dispossessed. The provision of wholesome dwellings for the poor is an object so universally approved that any member of Parliament resisting a measure framed to give powers to local authorities in regard to workmen's dwellings would find himself in a position of much difficulty. But if municipalities undertake to provide tenements, companies will refuse to compete with them, and private philanthropy will be tempted to stand aside. It is therefore a matter for grave doubt whether the action of municipalities in this particular sphere of work is really for the benefit of the poor, and whether by tinkering at an evil they do not make it worse than it would be if they left it alone.

The functions which we have referred to above as being those generally undertaken by municipalities may not unreasonably be defined as functions of service rather than of trade. The distinction, we admit, is a narrow one, but we find no better; and it was drawn by so high an authority as the Lord Provost of Glasgow. Before we pass to undertakings of a different class it is desirable for a moment to consider the attitude of corporations in regard to telephones. Telephonic communication is the monopoly of the Postmaster-General, and the possession of a license from him is a condition precedent to the establishment of a system by any other person. Acting as his licensees, the National Telephone Company have elaborated a supply which has fallen far short of satisfying the requirements of the public. By a consensus of opinion it is agreed that we are far behind not only the United States, but many parts of the Continent, in the facilities afforded for telephonic communication. The enjoyment by the company of what has been practically a monopoly has resulted in a service which is costly and inadequate. Telephones, if not actually a necessity of business life, are essential to its proper conduct. When the State, acting by the Postmaster General, refused to undertake the expense of establishing telephones, it adopted the alternative, which has certainly not proved successful, of handing the duty over to a company having no control of the highways or streets, and dependent on private negotiation for way-leaves. We are not concerned to discuss the question whether the failure of the National Telephone Company is due to the inherent difficulties of their task, or to the imperfect exercise of their powers. That they have failed is generally admitted, but as yet no method more likely to be successful has been adopted. The Government

continues to refuse to do for telephones what it has done with more or less good results for telegraphs; and at the same time has shown no disposition to follow the precedent of electric lighting and grant concessions limited to defined areas. The present state of things cannot continue without risk of provoking public indignation. The solution of the difficulty which has more than once been pressed on the attention of the Post Office and the Treasury is that they should become the owners and workers of trunk lines, and that limited franchise should be given either to municipal bodies or to companies, competing companies if necessary, over local areas. After repeated application Glasgow has obtained a license from the Postmaster-General, and is in a position to work an exchange over an area equal to that worked in Glasgow by the National Company. Only from the spread of this system and the consequent introduction of the principle of competition can we look for such a perfection of telephonic facilities as will enable all classes of the public to communicate with each other as freely and as cheaply as they do by post. Already in Glasgow it is proposed to establish numerous call offices where for a penny any one will be able to communicate with the entire area. The extension of such a system to the United Kingdom is a task immeasurably less difficult than the establishment of the penny post, and if properly worked there is every prospect that it would be a source of actual profit to those who undertake it. But the position requires to be boldly handled; the interests of a body of monopolists cannot be allowed to override the advantage and convenience of the public at large; and the efforts of the central Government should be supplemented by the energy and enterprise of local associations.

The satisfaction which municipal authorities have felt at the performance of the duties which we have referred to above has led, as might naturally be expected, to a desire for further responsibilities. Attempts have therefore been from time to time made to obtain an extension of the scope of municipal undertakings in directions which are far more open to criticism than the provision of either water, locomotion, or light, or the rendering of those services connected with local government which we have already mentioned. By an Act of last year power was given to a Midland corporation to provide Turkish baths. In a bill of the recent session power was sought, among other things, to provide apparatus for games and athletics, to be used

presumably, but not necessarily, on recreation-grounds established by the authority. In another, power was sought to provide refrigerators and cold ice stores for the preservation of marketable articles, and to sell ice. In another it was proposed to provide bathing tents. In another tailoring was contemplated; saddlery in another. In several, power was asked for to construct and manage refreshment-rooms in parks. By many corporations the power of manufacturing as well as supplying electrical fittings was demanded, and in three cases efforts were made to acquire the privilege of providing entertainments and charging for admission. These instances point to a very far-reaching attempt by municipalities to invade the province of individual enterprise, an attempt which needs very careful watching, and some authoritative pronouncement by Parliament of wider influence than the decision of particular committees.

For there can be no doubt that the constitution of Select Committees does not tend to uniformity of Parliamentary procedure, or the adoption of any carefully considered and authoritatively defined policy. Lord Morley indeed explained to the Joint Committee the carefully worked system with which he and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Commons deal with the proposals contained in private bills, and the vigilance of these gentlemen and their advisers, backed by the work of the Police and Sanitary Committee, goes far to minimise the risk that inequitable or improper proposals should slip through the Legislature unobserved. Nevertheless the exercise of this vigilance, of which Lord Redesdale was the first author, and in respect to which his example has been followed by successive chairmen of committees in both Houses, is not in itself a wholly sufficient safeguard. Lord Morley pointed out how he invariably refused to propose or support a bill containing a clause authorising the manufacture as well as the supply of electric and water fittings, but in spite of this well-understood attitude which the House of Lords has at his instance adopted, similar proposals are constantly made. It seems clear, therefore, that promoters have a lingering hope that their proposals will escape notice, and will be adopted by the Legislature without that full consideration which their novelty or their importance deserves. Unless Parliament makes up its mind with regard to some limit, it is sure to receive requests for powers of increasing variety and ever-widening scope; and there is serious risk that precedents may inadvertently be created by individual committees which it may be difficult hereafter to resist.



That there ought to be a limit we are satisfied. The policy of piling more and more work on corporations and town councils cannot safely be extended indefinitely. Councillors cannot undertake the supply of an enormous variety of commodities, however desirable it may be that there should be such a supply, without doing two things—overtaking their own powers, and injuriously interfering with the action of private traders. Aldermen and town councillors are, after all, unpaid, and valuable as is the unpaid labour of many functionaries of the United Kingdom, it is most unwise to lay upon unpaid labour too severe a burden. Not even a member of the London County Council—and the capacity for work of that body seems to be enormous, and to be maintained without any regard to the exhaustion of those who do it—can attend more than a certain number of committees, or efficiently take part in the direction of more than a certain number of divisions of work. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the majority of members of municipal councils are either men who have retired from business or who still are in business. The proportion of rich men wholly free from calls on their time, who devote themselves to local affairs, is small, especially in boroughs. It follows, therefore, that town councillors cannot give their whole time to municipal work, except in the case of men of comparatively advanced years, and even they are not likely to tolerate more than a certain inroad on their leisure. The danger, therefore, that if too much work is devolved upon local authorities it will be done with ever-lessening efficiency is considerable. This is not, however, so great a risk as would be undue interference with private enterprise. The huge volume of commerce of this country has been built up by private enterprise. It still exceeds the volume of commerce of any other country, in spite of the energetic competition of German and American rivals. The skill and perseverance to which it is due have overcome great difficulties, survived great dangers. To private enterprise, encouraged it may be by the countenance and support of the State, but owing little to its direct interference, is owing much of the prosperity of the Empire and the comfort of its inhabitants. Were the State to step in now and, by giving largely extended monopolies for the supply of commodities where no monopoly is *ex necessitate rei* compulsory, oust private enterprise from an important sphere of usefulness, it would be taking a retrograde step of widely baneful effect.

Let us for a moment consider in this aspect the question of food supply. If municipalities supply bakeries, why should they not attempt to supply bread? If slaughter-houses, why not animals? Mr. Burns, who ably supported the most advanced socialistic views at a discussion on this subject which took place at the rooms of the Society of Arts, would probably say 'Why not, indeed?' But wiser economists regard with a feeling little short of dread any effort to destroy the advantages arising from private enterprise in the matter of food supply. Were the duty of providing grain and meat entrusted either to a central or a local authority, there would be danger of paralysis in times of national emergency. The inventiveness and resource which search the world for means of providing this country with food would be hampered and checked—we are tempted to say, would in time be starved into inanition. As it is, we do not believe it possible, even were the fleets of Europe combined against us, that the importation of the grain and meat necessary to supplement our own resources would be altogether stopped. If any large proportion of the duty of supply devolved exclusively on a Government department, or local authorities generally, it is by no means clear that the same immunity would endure. Neither the State nor its local representatives can successfully establish the system of world-wide agency on which the operations of merchants, acting individually or in association, so largely depend. They cannot hope to carry out all the operations necessary to the distribution of food, and it is better, therefore, that they should attempt none.

There are two other considerations which were dwelt upon by Lord Alverstone, then Attorney-General, at the Society of Arts discussion. After pointing out that the power of corporations to make profits was quite a modern development which even as recently as the beginning of the Queen's reign was contrary to law, he urged that it was almost impossible to put the burden of trading on the right shoulders and so to regulate the charge as to place no weight on those who derived no benefit. It is not possible for a corporation to make the cost of an undertaking and the charge for it exactly balance, or so to adjust its affairs that the burden or profit of the undertaking should only fall on, or accrue to, those who use it. This is especially the case where a sinking-fund is provided, and where consequently the ratepayers of the present are charged for the benefit of the ratepayers of the future. On the other hand,

if no sinking-fund is provided there is risk that the rate-payers of the present may derive an advantage for which the ratepayers of the future will have to pay. The second point is, that there is no inducement held out to corporations to renew plant till it is worn out, or to replace obsolete machinery by improved. The stimulus of enhanced profit being lacking, corporations are tempted to go on with existing methods and devices as long as they possibly can. With private enterprise the temptation is the other way. No proprietor of a big business can hope to be lastingly successful who does not take the earliest opportunity of introducing the latest improvements for reducing the cost of production, or increasing its efficiency. Manufacturers who are not perpetually on the search for new inventions and fresh devices soon find that their profits dwindle. Under the useful influence of competition they do not hesitate to incur expense in development, which corporations too often indefinitely postpone.

We believe, then, that it behoves Parliament to impose some carefully framed limit on the trading efforts of municipalities within the areas administered by them. It may be that Lord Crew's Committee may find some sounder basis for fixing that limit than was suggested to them by the Lord Provost of Glasgow. But there is much wisdom in the definition he laid down, and he supported it with good sense fortified by long experience. He said that the municipalities might safely be entrusted with, but confined to, the supply of things which were in their nature suitable to a monopoly, which were articles of necessity, and which required control of the streets or portions of the public property of the municipality. Water is a necessity. No one wants two systems of water supply in the same area. And water supply involves user of the streets. So with tramways—where competition in the same district is not desirable. So with gas, and *malgré* the example of London where the double supply of energy for lighting purposes is not free from objection, so with electricity. Similar considerations apply, perhaps not with precisely the same force, but nevertheless with sufficient force, in the case of markets, slaughter-houses, public baths, and cemeteries. They do not apply in the case of bathing tents, refreshment-rooms, or refrigerators.

How necessary is the determination of its own attitude by Parliament may be demonstrated by reference to its action with regard to some of the exceptional powers sought during the recent session. Power to supply and let bathing tents

was, as we have stated, applied for by one corporation. This was refused. But in another case power was given to supply baths attached to pavilions and refreshment-rooms in public recreation-grounds. One corporation was allowed to make and sell ice, and provide refrigerators and cold-air stores. Another was refused power to make and sell ice, but allowed to provide refrigerators if and when it became the market authority. Until some principle is authoritatively laid down we may expect that the decisions of committees will be conflicting, that corporations will be encouraged to apply for much in the hope of getting something, and that the promoters of private undertakings will not be able to discover what doors are open to them, what are ajar, and what indisputably closed.

The task of Parliament is probably made easier by the fact that our municipal administration is far more free than that of many other countries from corruption and jobbery. Something may be said with regard to the attitude of municipalities towards those companies who seek concessions within their area; and on this point we propose presently to refer to some evidence which was given before the Joint Committee. But as regards their own action we have no hesitation in saying that our corporations are pure. Local affairs are administered with sole regard to the interests of the public. Occasionally follies are committed, and the fads of individual administrators are allowed to produce extravagance and loss. But the system of municipal administration which prevails in the United States, and which is caustically criticised by a writer in the 'Contemporary Review' of December 1899,\* is entirely foreign to the morality and the taste of the British Empire. No mayor or alderman would in this country, as in America, receive many thousands a year from an assurance company in which all the city officials find it convenient to take out their guarantee bonds at double rates, or draw large dividends from partnership in a firm of auctioneers and valuers doing municipal business. Nor could the head of a watering department receive money from contractors for permission to work below their contract. Such operations as have characterised the work of the 'Rings' in New York and Philadelphia would be impossible in Great Britain. Nor could it be said of British administration what is

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\* 'The Trend in American Cities.' By J. W. Martin. 'Contemporary Review,' No. ccccviii., December 1899.

said of American administration by Mr. John G. Agar in 'Municipal Affairs,' a New York quarterly, for March 1900:—

'Our municipalities are not organisations adapted to carry on any business properly. The powers which they possess are too narrowed by legislative limitations, or if perchance they be endowed with ample powers, the officials who possess them are as a rule disqualified by want of technical training or moral habit from exercising them for the best benefit of the community . . . The system of public ownership and operation in this country and at this time would certainly generate fraud in the procurement of labour and materials; would bring to the front ignorance, negligence and corruption in management; would give undue scope to party politics, more frequent opportunity for change of employees for corrupt purposes, and less opportunity to secure efficient service at reasonable rates; all to the end that the spoils system would be vastly strengthened and the people longer kept apart from their own.'

It is due to this cause that municipal enterprise with us is far ahead of municipal enterprise in the States, and that any tendency to go further has to be dealt with, not with regard to any corruption and rottenness in itself, but with regard to the true exercise of its influence on the interests of the public at large.

The attitude of local authorities towards companies seeking or exercising powers in their district is not so entirely free from the possibility of adverse comment as is their own administration. Where, as in the case of tramways, the consent of a local authority is necessary to the grant of a provisional order or the introduction of a private bill\* by a company, and also where, as in the case of electric lighting, the same consent is necessary, but may be dispensed with, local authorities have in a good many instances used their veto for the purpose of extorting conditions of doubtful equity. Not a tittle of evidence has indeed been brought forward to show that money payments to individuals are demanded as a price for assent, or that, as in America, direct or indirect commissions are paid. But conditions are required which press unduly on promoters, yet which nevertheless they often feel themselves forced to concede. Where these conditions are agreed there is risk that clauses giving effect to them may pass select committees *sub silentio*. Indeed, there is no doubt that in the majority of cases they would do so were it not for the action of Lord Morley and Mr.

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\* The former is by statute, the latter by standing order of Parliament.

Lowther. The evidence of Mr. Gray, counsel to the former, upon this point is noteworthy. He began by saying that in his view the intention of Parliament was that the consent of the local authority should be a 'clear consent:' that is, that it should exercise its discretion as to whether tramways should or should not be introduced into a town or a part of it, and leave the matter there. He went on, however, to add: \* 'But there has sprung up unfortunately a practice of 'demanding conditions by local authorities when their consent is asked for, and these conditions amount now in some 'cases to a demand that the local authority shall share the 'profits of the undertaking during the period which Parliament has given as the term of the company's tenure.' And he gave some remarkable instances of methods by which this was attempted to be done. In certain instances an annual rent was required to be paid by the company to the corporation. In others it was proposed to provide free passes over the tramways to officials of the council or other approved persons. A more common exaction attempted is to impose upon the promoters the duty of paying the whole cost of widening certain streets, including the purchase of land, or to oblige the company to pave the whole and not merely a portion of the street. Sometimes the company are compelled to allow the use of their poles for electric lighting, sewer ventilation, or other purposes.

Such clauses as these are usually struck out by the chairmen in the Houses, but even if in no instance does any objectionable condition escape their vigilance, it does not follow that the bargain which Parliament refuses to sanction is not carried out by an agreement made outside \* and independently of the bill.

Under the Electric Lighting Act, the assent of the local authority is a condition precedent to the grant of a provisional order. But the Board of Trade, the department granting the provisional order, can dispense with that consent and occasionally do so. They have therefore full opportunity for reviewing the conditions proposed to be attached, and striking out those which are inequitable. Indeed, as every clause has to be passed by them, they have a distinct obligation in the matter. There are strong grounds for assimilating the law of tramways and the law of electric lighting in this respect, and, by removal of the absolute veto of local authorities, destroying the temptation

to exact conditions which partake somewhat of the nature of blackmail. Not the least of the grounds is that, as Mr. Gray pointed out, it is not the greater municipalities of whom any complaint can be made. The authorities in such towns as Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool, Huddersfield and Glasgow—the list is too long to set out exhaustively—are far too public-spirited and large-minded to put forward unfair terms. ‘It is the smaller local authorities who seem to imagine they are entitled to get as much as they can out of the companies by these concessions.’ The power of the smaller local authorities to give play to this imagination is neither fair to the private companies nor to the interests of the public generally, and the sooner it is removed by Parliament the better.

We have hitherto dealt with the work of municipal corporations within their own area. Lord Crewe’s Committee will have in addition to deal with the operations of local authorities outside their own area. This aspect of the question is not complicated by extensive consideration of the subjects with which those operations deal. As yet the efforts of municipalities to obtain powers beyond local boundaries have not gone much beyond water, light, and locomotion. But the tendency to widen the spheres within which municipal supply of water, light, and locomotion is undertaken has of recent years grown very rapidly, and complications have shown themselves which call for parliamentary settlement, under peril of their becoming sources of inefficiency and friction.

It is difficult to lay down any rule which would prohibit any large municipality having established a well-considered and comprehensive system of water-supply from sharing the benefits of that supply with their neighbours. In Glasgow there is an excellent provision of water; the corporation supply a large area outside the city. They supply it, indeed, at a price about 33 per cent. higher than that which they charge to their own citizens, and thereby place the ratepayers of Glasgow in the position of traders making profit out of the ratepayers of neighbouring districts. But it is probably true that the neighbouring districts benefit by the arrangement. They could not easily find the capital necessary for a sufficient supply, and if they did they could scarcely confine that supply exactly to their own needs. It is probably cheaper for them to purchase from Glasgow than either to establish a system or organise a company with wide responsibilities and powers. When this, how-

ever, is granted the problem is not entirely solved. If municipalities may go outside their area, how far may they go? If they may make a profit out of their neighbours, is any limitation to be placed on its extent? Glasgow may be content with supplying a limited area, and with charging outsiders 10*d.* in the pound on their rental as compared with 7½*d.* charged to citizens. Other municipalities may desire to extend their area and increase their profits. We are no enemies of the London County Council, and have no desire to condemn the energy of that very zealous and self-confident body; but we shrewdly suspect that, if the water-supply of their own county were in their hands, they would rapidly develop a desire to include Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, and Surrey within their sphere of usefulness.

As with water, so also with tramways, Parliament has found it impossible to confine municipalities absolutely to their own area. The work of tramway companies had clearly no such limitation, and when the Legislature authorised the transfer of tramways, as regards working as well as regards ownership, to local authorities, it found itself at once face to face with the difficulty that exceptions to any such limitations were necessary. A populous or popular place might, for instance, be a few hundred yards outside a local boundary. It is obviously essential to good working of the tramway, and to the convenience of those who use it, that such a place should be connected with the town system. And it would be absurd to lay down the rule that a town might own and work all but a few hundred yards of its system, and that those should be administered by some other body. Or, again, a link might be necessary to connect, say, Leeds and Bradford, and it would be difficult to defend the proposition that Bradford and Leeds might each own and work its own system, but that the connexion between the two must be worked by neither.

But, the door once opened, the opening has become wider and wider. Glasgow is already working thirteen miles outside the city boundary, and expects soon to be working thirty-four. Huddersfield obtained powers this year to establish spurs of its own system, extending in many directions into many areas. And unless some proper check can be established, we may expect ere long to see a large number of town councils in the position of a board of directors owning and controlling a network of tramways over a wide district, and comparable in difficulty and importance with many minor systems of railways.



Somewhat similar is the position as regards electric lighting. Hertford, Taunton, Bangor, Bolton, and Birkenhead have powers of electric supply extending beyond their own cities. Manchester is empowered by statute to acquire concessions granted to local authorities adjacent to her boundaries, and has already dealt with five such authorities. Similar permission has been given by Parliament to St. Helens, Blackpool, Bootle, and Stockport. As yet, while the use of electricity is more or less confined to lighting, the areas of supply contemplated and applied for are not of unwieldy extent. But the promoters of the Electric Storage Bills of last session demonstrated clearly the advantages of wholesale dealing in electricity when that energy is used for power as well as light; and the ramifications of municipal enterprise are certain to increase with the growth of the uses to which electricity may be put.

Parliament, therefore, has to deal with a confirmed and rapidly developing tendency of municipalities to extend their operations further and further afield. It is a tendency that appears to be open to many serious dangers. As long as all goes well, the intrusion of one authority into the district of another will probably be regarded as for the interests of both. But in times of difficulty friction is certain to arise, and the jealousy and mistrust which local authorities as well as other administrative councils are apt to feel for each other are sure to come into play. Town councils are not more free from risk of disputes with their workmen than are other employers, and a labour dispute between a large municipality working a huge network of tramways in and outside the borough and the men whom it employs would be greatly complicated by the fact that some of the latter would be ratepayers in another district. So, too, if any question arose as to conditions of traffic or supply. It would be inevitably felt and said that, the primary duty of the supplying authority being to its own citizens, consumers in other districts would be obliged to put up with a second best, which would not be the case were they dealing with a company. The list of circumstances calculated to cause friction might be greatly extended. We have said enough to show that the policy of allowing municipal enterprise to extend the area of its trading operations cannot safely be allowed indefinite expansion. Some check, such as insistence on joint management and a sharing of responsibility by all the authorities affected, will have to be devised, and the higher the authority devising it the better.

The present seems a good opportunity for doing this. For it is easier to check the development of a policy which has reached a stage little open to censure, and possessing many advantages, than when it has progressed far into a region of controversy. The country is, as we have already said, proud of its municipal government, and has felt confidence in its municipal administrators. It has allowed and encouraged a growth of municipal enterprise which is greatly in advance of other countries. It finds a purity of method which is far from being reached on the other side of the Atlantic. It finds a combination of zeal and resource to which our colonies have not yet attained. The magnitude of the increase of responsibility which has resulted may be appreciated when it is remembered that whereas between 1875 and 1898 the National Debt was reduced by 130 millions, the local debt was during the same period increased by 170 millions. As yet this debt has produced no pressure. It would be rash to say it will never do so. New inventions may at any time destroy the value of undertakings at present remunerative. A European war in which this country was concerned might seriously add to the pressure of a burden now lightly borne. Even if no such dangers become imminent, an unlimited encroachment into the field of private enterprise by rate found capital cannot be regarded without dismay even by staunch advocates of local government.

We have already referred to the limitations suggested by the Lord Provost of Glasgow. Sir Henry Fowler, a friend of municipal administration if ever there was one, pursuing a similar line of thought, has suggested a slightly different definition of the sphere within which corporate enterprise might be confined. He would limit it to such undertakings as are clearly for the common good and the general use of the whole community, and which it is for the public advantage to place under public control. But he at once recognised a qualification of this definition when he went on to point out that general user cannot of itself decide the question, otherwise would municipal manufacture of tobacco and beer become desirable, with this result, that if the price of these articles as municipally supplied were higher than the actual cost, the consumers thereof would be rated for the relief of those who do not smoke or drink beer; if lower, those who neither smoke nor drink would be taxed to supply those who do.

Again, where a municipality trades in competitive articles

it taxes the whole community, including the private trader, who finds himself compelled to contribute to a fund designed to destroy his profits and ruin his trade. The taxation of the whole body of consumers for the benefit of a limited number of producers is a policy opposed not only to the essential principles of Free trade, but to a view of economy which is taken by a largely preponderating majority of Englishmen who have at all considered the question. Mr. Burns, indeed, and the extreme Socialists who hold that all private property and all instruments of production should be in the hands of the State, may think otherwise. But the sound principle is that which will probably recommend itself not only to the Legislature, but to the general opinion of the country.

There is still one more point of view from which a policy of extended municipal enterprise may be regarded. We have hitherto dealt chiefly with the economical side of the question. Sight must not be lost of the political or social side. Were corporations allowed to become traders on a widely extended scale, huge and ever-increasing numbers of the lower and middle classes would become salaried officials of the local bodies in whose election, as things are at present, they would have a considerable share. This would be desirable neither in their own interests nor in those of the general body of ratepayers. If they were allowed to continue in the enjoyment of the right to vote at municipal elections, they would be unable to resist the temptation of endeavouring to improve their conditions of employment by combined use of the franchise. They would believe themselves in the possession of a powerful lever which they would endeavour to use solely for their own benefit. From this danger the Civil Service of the Crown itself is not entirely free. The danger would be more general, more influential, and more far-reaching in its effects in the case of municipal officers and workmen. Already there has arisen in some quarters a demand for the parliamentary disfranchisement of civil servants. The justice of the demand has not as yet been generally admitted, because civil servants are concerned in the wise government of the country, and ought not to be wholly without influence in the selection of its governors. It would be less easy to insist on the right to the municipal franchise of municipal servants if they could be shown to be habitually using that franchise with sole regard to their attitude towards their employers.

Nor is it for the advantage of the community that there

should be an army of salaried officials of municipalities living in their midst. In this country we might perhaps expect to avoid the corruption, the financial tyranny, and the dishonesty which, on the other side of the Atlantic, have tended to enrich a few privileged and unscrupulous individuals at the expense of the public. We could scarcely hope to escape the evils inseparable from 'dressing' a huge number of persons in 'a little brief authority' over the business relations and even the social life of their neighbours. On the Continent our friends, and still more their guests, have long groaned under the small despotisms exercised by municipalities and their officers. But their powers are wielded in matters of government, not in matters of trade. In the United Kingdom people would not stand being dragooned by regiments of uniformed officials when purchasing necessities or moving from place to place. From any such risk competition frees them now. It would no longer do so were there to be a very wide extension of municipal monopolies. The petty but very irritating friction even now produced by the temptation to abuse authority, to which officers of railway companies and other large industrial undertakings are prone to yield, would be gravely increased were the authority wielded by officers not of private companies, but public authorities. The difficulty of dealing with labour disputes would be greatly enhanced, and the value of municipal administration seriously impaired, were a large body of municipal electors in a position to use their votes for personal rather than public considerations.

All that we have said points to the extreme desirability of the reappointment of Lord Crewe's Committee next year. This will now have to be the work of a new Parliament, and there may become necessary some changes in the *personnel* of the Committee, which may be a subject of regret, but need not materially impair the value of a report. We cannot too firmly insist on the proposition the truth of which Sir Henry Fowler himself asserted. An inquiry into municipal trading is neither directly nor indirectly an attack upon our municipal institutions. What it may lead to is the establishment of wise and temperate conditions regulating the grant of powers, and affecting the area within which they should be exercised, as well as the subject-matters with which they should deal. To the determination of such conditions the most staunch friend of municipal institutions need not object. No one denies what Sir Henry Fowler described as the rare advantages of the devotion, wise supervision, and

experienced management of the large array of citizens who work our local administration. But the truest admirers of that large army must admit that there are limits to the value and efficiency of their work, and cannot desire to extend it indefinitely. The sphere of usefulness of our great boroughs is sufficient to satisfy the ambition of even the most energetic lord mayor, mayor, or town-clerk. But neither those functionaries nor the country wish to see a system of bureaucratic influence built up which would tend to paralyse individual enterprise and remove inducements to that investment of capital and skill by private persons to which our Empire is so largely indebted for the extent of its commerce and the magnitude of its resources.

- ART. VII.—1. *Cæsar's Conquest of Gaul.* By T. RICE HOLMES. London: Macmillan, 1899.
2. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. XIII. Edidit O. HIRSCHFELD. Berlin: Reimer, 1899.
3. *Caesars Rheinfestung.* Von H. NISSEN und C. KOENEN. Bonn: Verein von Altertumsfreunden, 1899.
4. *The Romans on the Riviera and the Rhone.* By W. H. (BULLOCK) HALL. London: Macmillan, 1898.
5. *La Religion des Gaulois, les Druides et le Druidisme.* Par A. BERTRAND. Paris: Leroux, 1897.

THE Italian statesman Machiavelli, in his 'Prince,' makes some curious and suggestive remarks on the best methods of making and maintaining a conquest. The theme has not often been pursued since his day; during the last half-century in particular, men have preferred other and pleasanter aspects of history than that afforded by wars and national catastrophes. But the experiences of conquering peoples are neither dull nor unimportant, and the various forms of conquest may occupy the reader with at least as much propriety as the various forms of individual slavery. Two of these forms of conquest are well enough known to modern men. To us in England the most familiar is the conquest effected by civilised white men over uncivilised Africans or Asiatics who seem to be separated from their conquerors not only by the degree of their civilisation, but even more by a broad distinction of race. Such conquests, we know, are often successful, permanent, and accepted by the conquered, but they do not and perhaps cannot result in the fusion of conquered and conqueror. To the continental European, on the other hand, the word conquest denotes rather the conquest of civilised white men by civilised white men, followed, as experience bitterly proves, by the persistent hatred of Pole for Russian or southern Slav for Magyar.

We desire to consider here a third and different form of conquest, the conquest of uncivilised by civilised Europeans where no racial gulf irremediably sunders the conquered and the conquerors, and the difference in civilisation can therefore become obliterated by the assimilation of the one to the other. No instance of such a conquest has occurred in recent times. The peoples of Europe—the white races as we style them—have all long since attained a greater or less

degree of civilisation, and if they were now to conquer one another, their conquest would resemble the conquest of Poland. But we can find instances in antiquity, and we have several in the history of the Roman Empire. The extension of that Empire over western and central Europe was, in fact, the conquest by civilised Italians of uncivilised Gauls and Spaniards and Germans and Dacians who were not far removed racially from their conquerors. They possessed at least the one thing needful, the capacity to develop in conformity to the civilised Italian type; they became in the end as Roman as the Romans. We propose in the following paragraphs to trace one of these conquests, the conquest of Gaul—that is, France and western Germany. Part of the story is familiar to everyone. *Et nos ergo manum* —; we have all misconstrued Cæsar in our time, fourteen lines a lesson. But we will now stretch the tale out further, beginning at the first annexation sixty years before Cæsar's campaigns, and continuing on till the settlement of Gaul under the early Empire.

The period in which Rome commenced her definite occupation of Gaulish soil is curious and remarkable, and historians have not always described it well. It is best known as the age of the Gracchi, when, as we are usually told, the internal energy and external power of Rome were alike visibly declining, and the very existence of the State was endangered by convulsive efforts at reform. The men who lived at the time would perhaps have put it otherwise. The sixty years from about B.C. 160 to B.C. 100, in the middle of which the elder Gracchus rose and fell, were years for Rome of immense and real expansion. It was an expansion in one definite direction—commercial and capitalist. The dominant senatorial oligarchy combined with the great traders—merchants, money-lenders, slave-dealers—to carry out a policy of wide external aggrandisement which immediately enriched politician and trader alike. At the opening of this half-century Rome possessed four 'provinces' outside of Italy; five were now added and were filled at once with a crowd of Romans. Senators held the lucrative governorships or speculated in the vast estates which in the course of annexation became confiscated to the Roman People; merchants pushed their wares and money-lenders forced their loans on unhappy tribute-paying natives. Within these provinces Roman commerce had a monopoly; to secure that more effectively, Rome's commercial rivals were ruthlessly crushed. Carthage and Corinth were

annihilated, and Rhodes, the third great trading city of the Mediterranean, was ruined indirectly, since, as an old ally of Rome, she could not decently be destroyed by force. The island of Delos, once the home of Apollo, was selected by the Roman government as the centre for Roman traders in the East, and endowed with the privileges of a free port. It became rapidly the greatest slave-mart in the then world, and its ruins, lately excavated by French archæologists, testify to its prosperity and wealth. Other measures were taken. A new currency was introduced to facilitate direct intercourse between Rome and the Levant; roads were constructed in Italy and in the provinces, and expansion was visible on all sides. No doubt the period had another side. Ominous signs were showing themselves in Italy—decay of agriculture, distress among the rural population, political discontent among the Italians who had not the Roman franchise, lack of recruits, growth of estates worked by slave-labour on the plantation system. Abroad, too, the administration of the rapidly enlarging empire was causing difficulty. Governors and generals, chosen by social rank and not by merit, were found to be incapable or dishonest, and the military history of the period is not without its scandals. But these evils were slightly felt at first; their full seriousness lay in the future. For the moment the period was one of vast commercial expansion, and to it, and indeed to the latter half of it, we owe the first Roman conquest of Gaul, commenced in B.C. 118.

Roman armies had, of course, been seen in Gaul long before this date. They had gone there in the vain attempt to stop Hannibal. They had fought, later on, with the Ligurian hill-tribes, along the Riviera. They had helped Massilia, the old Greek city allied with Rome, to defend herself and her dominions against the natives, and it was this last errand which led immediately to the annexation. A short series of successful campaigns by Roman troops on behalf of Massilia ended in the establishment of a Roman province. Massilia itself remained independent and kept its territory, the coast from the Maritime Alps to the Rhone; the Romans apparently thought it useless trouble to administer this district themselves when they could leave it to be governed in their interest by their Massiliot allies. But the rest of the coast, from the Rhone to the Pyrenees, was constituted a Roman province, called, after its capital Narbo, Gallia Narbonensis. There was some military advantage in the step, for it helped, as Mr. Holmes observes,



to complete and secure the communication by land between Italy and the Roman dominions in Spain. But the main motive was undoubtedly commercial. Gaul in prehistoric days must have been rich in gold and silver, and though the mines were more or less exhausted, there was still booty enough in precious metal to tempt a Pizarro. Moreover, an excellent trade-route opened out from Narbonne. Most travellers in the south of France know the 'Pass of Carcassonne,' the valley which divides Cevennes and Pyrenees and gives easy access from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. It is used to-day by railroad and canal; it was used then to bring the products of the Atlantic lands, and not least, the tin from Britain, to the Roman world.

The character of the occupation corresponded to the motives for its conquest. Throughout the sixty years which elapsed between the annexation and the arrival of Cæsar, the province was, like other provinces, a happy hunting-ground for money-making Romans. Its boundaries were extended up the Rhone valley and across it, north of the Massiliot possessions. Rome came to rule, directly or indirectly, all the country between the Cevennes, the Alps, and the sea. It is a pleasant land, as we see it to-day, with its brilliant sunshine and crisp air and cloudless skies; on the far horizons, the mountain-summits beyond which lie Italy and central France; near at hand the rich crops, the vines and olives of Provence, and the dark rows of stately cypresses which break the blast of the northern mistral; and here and there the little crowded towns with tortuous ancient streets, hiding so many memories of two thousand years. The Roman conquerors did not trouble about such things; they came to exploit the land as a commercial prize. They bought confiscated estates at a cheap rate from their government, and resold them or worked them at a noble profit. They drew the whole trade of the province into their hands, and so thoroughly controlled all monetary dealings that not a pennyworth (it was said) was bought or sold without their intervention. They built with forced labour a 'Route Nationale,' as the French would now style it, from northern Italy to the Pyrenees—Mr. Bullock Hall has a good chapter on its course. They requisitioned tribute in corn and tribute in money to supply the Roman armies fighting in Spain, and provoked thereby a serious insurrection. But they did nothing for the advancement or the civilisation of the province. They established, indeed, a *colonia* of Roman citizens at Narbo, but the citizens were

not enfranchised Gauls; they came from Rome, and the whole measure, so far as it was not a sop to a particular political element at home, was intended to provide a permanent fortress to hold the province down. Individual provincials, more particularly native nobles, acquired the Roman franchise sporadically; one or two of them, or their descendants, are mentioned by Cæsar as aiding him as interpreters or otherwise. But the Roman of the Republic was incapable of conceiving a broad scheme for the advancement of his subjects. The provinces, as he put it, were his *prædia*, his estates acquired for his commercial advantage, and, as such, commercially administered. And the provincials, unless they were educated Greeks, counted for little better in his eyes than the negro or the Kanaka counts to-day in the eyes of a brutal trader.

Only one striking incident marks the history of these sixty years. Not long after the establishment of the province, two great hordes of migrating peoples, the Cimbri and the Teutoni, attempted to force their way through Gaul into Italy. Who they were and whence they came is neither certain, nor, indeed, very important; enough that they form one item in the series of northern barbarians who have, throughout all history, sought the sunnier south. Their advance sounded formidable enough. Five Roman armies, one after the other, were defeated and fled before them, and Marius, then Rome's 'only general,' went to meet them himself. The topography of his campaign has been investigated with a generous enthusiasm by Mr. Bullock Hall, in a volume named at the head of this article, but we are not sure that he has solved its problems, or that means exist for solving them. Our information is, indeed, too scanty in respect to many of the topographical problems of antiquity, and we must often in patience wait for more light. For the rest, Marius won by the common trick of sending a division round to attack the barbarians flank and rear, and his victory was decisive. Several Roman edifices in Provence have been thought to commemorate this victory, notably the triumphal arch which fronts the traveller as he enters Orange from the north, and the smaller arch and graceful two-storied monument which stand, set in a circle of ancient trees, on the grassy hillside above St. Remy, looking out over the wide plain of Avignon. But the arch of Orange is, in all probability, more than a century later than Marius, and the arch and monument of St. Remy are little, if at all, earlier in date; the monument, indeed, bears

a sepulchral inscription which should have saved it from being ever considered a memorial of military success. It is more credible that the canal or channel of the Rhone from Arles to Foz on the Mediterranean coast may have been first constructed by Marius, but, with this exception, no remains of his work survive in Gaul. It is likely enough that the invasion of the Cimbri made little permanent difference to the land. The hurricane came, passed by, and was not. Only the Roman victory exalted the Roman prestige and helped to assure their dominion.

At last, in 58 B.C., Cæsar came to Gaul, and in eight years all was changed. The Roman frontiers were advanced from the Cevennes to the Atlantic, and from the Rhone to the Rhine; the Massiliot territory was incorporated; the whole of Gaul was made Roman. How it was done Cæsar has told us himself, and practically all our knowledge rests upon his narrative. It is a wonderful book, the 'Commentaries on the Gallic War,' of all military histories the most famous and at the same time the most cold and passionless. There was no scarcity of stirring scenes in those eight campaigns. Then was seen the extreme of desperate bravery; individual heroism found and accepted numerous chances; victories were won from the threshold of defeat; stratagem and surprise and ambush abounded. Cæsar knew this well enough. In his book he has described the dramatic incidents; he has given full mention to the devotion and courage of the lower officer or common soldier, and he writes generously of enemies. But there is no passion nor even rhetoric in his story; his feelings, whatever they were, do not influence his diction. It is not merely that he was no composer of impassioned rhetorical prose, like Sir William Napier. Nor is it merely that he was a classical writer, exhibiting the severity and self-restraint and terseness which mark those ancients whom in a double sense we call the classics. Cæsar is cold beyond the classical model. We see in him a general who knew that conquests are not made by mere feats of arms; a statesman who had no interest in romance; perhaps also an Italian who shared the persistent Italian indifference to useless personal gallantry. Therefore he set the sensational elements of his long and varied struggle into their strict proportions, neither omitting brave acts nor adorning them with a rhetorical halo; he essayed to write a severe, lucid, direct account of his wars, and he was sober, lucid, and direct, as only a great writer can be. Why he wished to

write has been much disputed. The ulterior objects of great writers are, of course, always disputed; that is one of the unfortunate results of being great and arousing popular interest. Everyone wants to have his own explanation of why the book was written. But it is easiest to believe that Cæsar wrote because he desired to do so. The conquest of Gaul was a great work: he wished to leave a record of it, as he himself conceived it. Modern critics have accused him of bad faith and carelessness and Mr. Holmes actually fills seventy pages of close print with the recital and refutation of such accusations—a waste of time, we fear, for they are, in general, quite unworthy of serious notice. Probably Cæsar sometimes gave himself the benefit of the doubt; we can imagine his opponents differing from him about one or two negotiations, though that does not prove him in the wrong. Probably, too, he made trifling mistakes in describing the minuter details of battles; this certainly was alleged by that master of literary depreciations, Asinius Pollio, and if it is not true in some small degree, Cæsar stands unique among military historians. But the general accuracy and good faith of his work are visibly stamped upon it; his contemporaries, Pollio excepted, entertained no doubts on the matter, and with these two evidences we may rest content.

Before we pass from the Commentaries to the war which they describe we should like to pause and express a regret. It is this—that we possess no standard edition of the great work. Schoolbooks abound by the thousand: extracts and adaptations and selections, fitted with appropriate vocabularies and exercises and maps and illustrations, crowd the shelves of the happy third-form master. But a real edition, a correct text, with full and scholarly notes on all points of interest or difficulty, does not exist, at least in English. Mr. Holmes has written an excellent book: occasionally, indeed, as we have noted in the last paragraph, it is almost too excellent. But some points, such as the two raids into Britain, do not come within his scope; some points have been crowded out, and his book does not profess to be an edition of Cæsar, but a history of the Gallic War. The Oxford University Press has recently published what seems meant to be an elaborate edition such as we desire. But that book is totally unworthy either of Oxford or of Cæsar, and the less said about it the better. The moment is auspicious. The recent researches of foreign scholars into the text of Cæsar have reached their conclusion; the

topographical material is as complete as it is likely to be, and our knowledge of the Roman army has been recently much widened by German inquirers, one or two of whom have escaped even the vigilant eye of Mr. Holmes. All this material ought to be summed up, sifted, and condensed into one great edition of the 'Commentaries.' Such an edition is demanded alike by the literary excellence of the work and the interest of the war and the significance of the results to the whole of Western Europe.

Like most great wars, the Gallic War probably came somewhat as a surprise to the man who carried it through. When Cæsar took over the governorship of Gaul he certainly intended it to be something more than an ordinary provincial appointment. He secured a much larger area of government than was usual—not Narbonensis only, but Northern Italy as well, that is, all the land from the Pyrenees to the Adriatic. He secured it for five years—an unusually long period—and his staff and army were larger than usual, and supplied in part, as it seems, by depleting the garrison of the adjacent Spanish administrations. He knew also, when he claimed the post, that the western part of his province, Narbonensis, was disturbed by the fear of a German invasion. Possibly he thought that as his predecessor and kinsman Marius had defeated the Teutoni in Southern Gaul and the Cimbri in Northern Italy, so he might defeat the German invaders opposed to him, and win no less glory. If, however he went out with the hope of routing the Germans, he stayed with the determination to conquer the Gauls. Probably he acquired the technical authorisation of the home government to the new project—our records are a little obscure on the point. Certainly he decided on it before the German campaign was ended. He selected winter quarters suitable for an attack on the most dangerous Gaulish tribes, and he spent the months of winter inactivity in levying new troops in Northern Italy.

The war which thus commenced has sometimes been described as if it was merely an exciting series of desperate combats with brave but uncivilised enemies. It was far more than that. It had its full share of stirring scenes, as we have already observed, but they were not the whole, nor even the larger portion, of the matter. In it tactical science counted above courage, and strategy above tactics, and in both its strategy and its tactics the spade counted above the sword: it was the war of an engineer, not of a cavalry leader. Nor was it only a war. The labours of Cæsar the

general were equalled, or almost equalled, by the more delicate but no less harassing labours of Cæsar the diplomatist. Friendly Gauls had to be humoured and kept faithful; waverers had to be constantly and secretly watched; negotiation and intrigue were needed in all directions. The whole thing was quite unlike our English wars of conquest, not merely because these have been waged against races totally different from ourselves, but because the conduct of the war and the causes of success were equally different. The nearest parallel may perhaps be found in the work of Warren Hastings; the sharpest contrast is afforded by the Indian Mutiny. In the Mutiny we owed our success to individual prowess—the nerve which cowed incipient disaffection, the tenacity which kept the flag flying over an isolated post, the devoted courage which stormed against any odds. Cæsar had round him stout-hearted and tenacious and daring men, and they had their share in giving him his victory. But in the end that victory was due to other and perhaps more noteworthy causes.

First, indeed, there is Cæsar himself, a hard character to describe. Wrapt as he is in the cloud of modern panegyric, the features of the man can with difficulty be discovered. A profound intellect, liberal alike in its conceptions and its sympathies; a cool, rapid judgement, wholly free from sentiment, and singularly capable of seeing facts as they were; an immense power of work; a determination which recoiled from no act logically demanded by the scheme in hand; a heart wide open to friends and magnanimous even to foes when once they had submitted; a keen sensibility to the charms of art and literature when no graver interests were at stake—such were among the characteristics of this great Italian. Add that he was a general whom good judges have placed only a little way behind Hannibal and Alexander, and we shall not perhaps, if we are wise, call him ‘a perfect man,’ nor ‘the greatest man of action that ever lived,’ but we shall understand his fitness to do all that Cæsar did.

As a general he was, in the first place, a strategist of a very high order. He had the eye of a military genius for the vulnerable point in his enemy’s plans, and he knew how to strike at it straight and rapidly. His mobility in particular was extraordinary. His first journey from Rome to Gaul was made at the rate of ninety miles a day; his second campaign opened with his wholly unexpected arrival among the Belgæ, before their preparations were complete.

Over and over again his speed enabled him to succour a hard-pressed outpost or detached force, or brought him first to the field of battle, or gave a terrible effectiveness to his pursuit of a routed enemy. Statistics of marches do not prove much, for the conditions of weather and soil and gradient vary widely; but Cæsar speaks of forty-six miles in twenty-four hours as no extraordinary achievement for heavy infantry. His movements were facilitated, no doubt, by the fertility of Gaul and the friendship of a portion of its inhabitants. Provisions could be stored easily in suitable spots, or even procured on the march. Yet, even allowing for all this, we cannot but admire the ease and rapidity with which he was able to march wherever he desired.

But other commanders have known where to strike and strike swiftly. Cæsar's generalship had one feature peculiar to himself—his use of the spade. The Roman legionary and his entrenching tools were at all periods inseparable companions; but we know of no commander, before or after Cæsar, who employed those tools so fully and freely as he did. Not only did he fortify himself on almost every battlefield: he was even able by his earthworks to affect the strategy of entire campaigns. By a series of entrenchments covering a distance of nearly twenty miles, he changed the whole direction of the Helvetian invasion. By even larger circumvallations he caught Vercingetorix at Alesia, and a mound and a ditch destroyed the last and fiercest resistance of the Gauls against the Romans. It was not mere accident that he did this. Even the severe reserve of his narrative betrays his engineering interest. He is careful to describe his earthworks fully, giving dimensions and other details. He goes out of his way to explain the precise method by which the Gauls, or some of them, constructed their fortress ramparts, and the remains of eleven Gallic fortresses in Central France testify to his accuracy. The same spirit is apparent in that curious specification of his bridge across the Rhine, which most of us have probably groaned over at some period of our Latin studies. This was obviously written with a sincere belief in the usefulness of such works: it is not merely a boast over a *tour de force*.

His army at the commencement of the Gallic War comprised four legions—that is, some twenty thousand heavy infantry, and a few archers, slingers, and other light troops. This scanty and inadequate force was speedily and steadily increased. By the close of the war Cæsar commanded ten

or eleven legions. The new legions were not raised in Gaul, but elsewhere in Cæsar's province, in North Italy, which was then, and for a century later, the finest recruiting-ground in the Roman dominions, and was all the more suitable to Cæsar's purpose because of certain legal requirements concerning the birth and status of legionaries. One body of infantry—the *Alaudæ*—was, indeed, raised in Gaul and organised as a legion, but it did not obtain legionary rank or title till long after the end of the war. The new legions came, as we have said, from Northern Italy. But the addition of six legions did not mean necessarily the addition of as much as thirty thousand men to Cæsar's forces. Cæsar seems to have followed a somewhat peculiar plan in dealing with recruits. When a legion had fallen below its proper strength through illness and fighting, he did not always fill it up with raw recruits. He raised new legions for his recruits; he kept the old legions apart, so that they consisted wholly or almost wholly of veterans. That is to say, he held a weak veteran legion better than a full legion of recruits and veterans mixed. And for his own age he was right. For at that time the veteran counted for everything in warfare, and the recruit for nothing, in a way to which military history provides no proper parallel. The superiority of the veteran can be seen in almost every engagement throughout the Gallic and the succeeding Civil Wars. It explains, for instance, why at the outset of the Civil War in B.C. 49 Cæsar dared to rush into Italy with only a slender force. His troops were trained soldiers; the Pompeian troops opposed to him, though far more numerous, were untrained levies, and his reckless-looking enterprise was far less dangerous than it looks.

Heavy infantry was the bulk of Cæsar's army, as of all ancient armies. But it was not only the heavy infantry which was strengthened during the war. To the light troops were added large levies of friendly Gallic cavalry. It would be interesting if we could learn more about these horsemen. From allusions in the 'Commentaries' it is plain that they numbered some thousands, and Cicero, in calculating Cæsar's strength at the end of the Gallic War, observes that he had 'as much cavalry as he chose.' This occurrence of a strong body of cavalry is noteworthy. Horsemen were little used in ancient Greek and Roman warfare until after 300 A.D. Hannibal employed them with effect; Alexander may be counted among the finest cavalry officers of all time; but the ordinary general



confined himself to heavy infantry. Now there are faint signs that Cæsar tried to make more of the cavalry arm: it was indeed singularly useful to him, with his frequent rapid moves across wide stretches of country. The attempt unfortunately failed, and perhaps the battle of Pharsalia is to blame. In that battle, the battle which decided the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey, the turning-point was the rout of the Pompeian cavalry by a body of Cæsar's infantry. More significance was perhaps attached to the incident than it deserved; but for three centuries no Roman general ventured to confront infantry with cavalry.

Cæsar was not only a great general at the head of a great army: he not only won victories, but he used them with a pitiless logical thoroughness which he has been at no pains to disguise. No one ever inquired in the Gallic War whether loyalty to Cæsar 'paid.' Those who submitted to him and took his side he treated with kindness, even with generosity; he rewarded them and protected them. But when he had to stamp out opposition his kindness and generosity disappeared. The Aduatuci broke out in the middle of an incomplete surrender: the whole of them, fifty-three thousand, were sold into slavery. The Veneti laid hands on some Roman commissioners, and, when Cæsar came to punish them, made a singularly gallant defence: they, too, were sold wholesale into slavery. The Usipetes and Tencteri came across the Rhine into Gaul contrary to his wishes: their chiefs were seized at a peaceful interview, and their host was practically annihilated. The Eburones defeated one of his generals: he drove them into their forests and marshes, and invited the neighbouring tribes to come and destroy them, root and branch: every man, woman, and child who escaped the sword was to perish by hunger. Avaricum was stormed after a long siege and desperate defence: forty thousand Gauls, every living being within it, were at once massacred. The hill-fort of Uxellodunum held out stubbornly through the final campaign of the war. When the garrison at last surrendered, their hands were cut off and they were dismissed to exist as best they might—a living monument of the wrath of Cæsar. In many of these cases, Cæsar had some technical justification of broken truce or rebellion after surrender, but it is plain enough that these technical justifications were not his real motives. He meant to break down opposition and he did it. He would have accepted Virgil's summary of a Roman's duty, '*Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*,' and he would have given to *debellare* its sternest

and most terrible sense. We need not call him brutal or bloodthirsty. He did not kill for the sake of killing. When he desired he could be humane enough, as he proved to his beaten countrymen after the end of the Civil War. But he plainly reckoned a Roman life more valuable than that of a Gaul, and when the Gaul opposed him he crushed the resistance with a cold thoroughness which is far more dreadful than the mere ferocity of a wanton, murder-loving barbarian.

The Gauls themselves were in no fit condition to face such a man. We may, indeed, put aside as an idle fancy the assertion that by Cæsar's time they had degenerated from their pristine vigour. We do not know so much about this alleged 'pristine vigour' that we can argue in detail concerning it, but it is certain that Cæsar did not regard his foes as *décadents*. Their armies, doubtless, lacked the cohesion, the discipline, and the weapons of the legionary, but they were numerous, brave, and often skilfully led. Their fatal defect was not want of vigour but of political unity. Canton was jealous of canton, chieftain of chieftain; they rarely combined, and still more rarely held together. 'Singuli pugnans, universi vincuntur:' 'they fight singly, and the whole of them are conquered,' says Tacitus of the British Celts at a later date. The observation is true of most savage races: it is singularly true of the Celts in Gaul whom Cæsar conquered. The Gauls were not even agreed in resisting Cæsar. The Ædui and other dwellers in central France were friendly to him, and actually assisted him with men and supplies. The one common bond which historians have found for them is that supplied by the Druids. Many things have been imagined about this mysterious order of priests, but one fact seems clear. At no period in the Gallic War do they exercise any political influence. They do not, as a national priesthood might, exhort their countrymen to combine against the common foe, nor do they come forward as the preachers of submission. They do not appear at all. Accident has preserved us the names of one or two, for instance Divitiacus, or, as he ought perhaps to be called, Diviciacus, and from these few instances we see that a Druid might be a man of high rank and political standing. But he did not politically act as a Druid. Whatever kind of priesthood the Druids represent, they counted for nothing, as Druids, in the death-struggle of their country.

The war itself falls into the two usual parts—first, four or five years of continuous conquest, then three of

desperate resistance from the conquered and from many of their countrymen who previously had sided with Cæsar. Such is the course of all conquests. The conquered, crushed by military disasters, submit for the moment; then, recovering from panic and realising what the loss of independence really means, they attempt, under some Vercingetorix, a new, a more desperate, and perhaps a more general resistance. In Gaul the two scenes of the war were enacted in different districts, the first in the north and west, the second in the centre. This apparent reversal of the natural order of conquest seems to be due partly to geography, partly to the attitude of the various Gaulish tribes to Rome. The most prominent feature in Gaulish geography is the great mountain complex of the Auvergne and the Cevennes, a large elevated area, inhabited by a brave and warlike people, and most difficult for military operations. South of that mass lies the open valley of the Rhone, the Provincia Narbonensis which Cæsar found when he came to Gaul, a southern land whose sun and air and scents and flowers distinguish it wholly from northern France. North and west of the mass stretch the great spreading plains watered by the Loire and the Seine, devoid of physical features and in all ages easily traversed by armies. The inhabitants of the central hills, the Arverni, like their northern neighbours the Ædui, were at first friendly to Cæsar. Naturally enough, he left them alone in their hills and set out to conquer the plains. Five campaigns were occupied in that object and it had been approximately attained; then the war shifted to the central hills. The Arverni repented them of their friendliness to Rome, and headed a desperate movement of nearly all Gaul to destroy the Roman power. The leader was the Arvernian Vercingetorix; the decisive battles were fought in the Arvernian territory, round the gloomy and precipitous fortresses of that difficult land.

We do not propose to enter into the details of this great war. We have sketched in their most important outlines the course and character of the fighting and the causes which gave Cæsar the victory. What remains is largely topographical technicalities. It is useless in a brief sketch to try to follow in the footsteps of Cæsar. His marches from month to month were dictated by the needs of the occasion, and the maps of his journeys which schoolmasters sometimes draw for us are much more irritating than even their maps of St. Paul's journeys and considerably less profitable. It is still more useless to embark on questions of

detailed sites. Mr. Holmes has dealt with most of these questions elaborately, and in this respect, as in many others, his book will be indispensable to the serious student of Cæsar. But the problems cannot be understood without large-scale maps and local knowledge; most of them can only be settled by excavation, and many are altogether insoluble. We propose, however, to pause over the subject so far as to notice two of these topographical questions which are of special interest: the question whence Cæsar started for Britain, and the question where he bridged the Rhine. The first question has an absorbing interest for many Englishmen and Frenchmen; the second has been illustrated by a recent discovery. Both questions are, of course, wholly unimportant. It really does not matter one whit whether Cæsar sailed from the east or west side of Cape Grisnez; the one important thing is that he sailed and that momentous consequences ensued for Britain. But the minor circumstances of great events, like the dressing-gowns and slippers of great men, excite an interest which is not necessarily so foolish as it sounds.

The harbour from which Cæsar crossed to Britain, the *Portus Itius*, is considered by Mr. Holmes in a long note of ten closely printed pages, which is not, perhaps, quite so good as most of his topographical work. He concludes that it is Wissant, the bay of 'white sand' between Boulogne and Calais, or, more precisely, between the two headlands of Grisnez and Blancnez, which he believes to have extended further out in Cæsar's time than they do now. His reasons for this view are summed up by himself as follows:—

'I believe that Wissant is the *Portus Itius* because there appears to be direct evidence (the evidence of Strabo) that it was called by that name; because, alone among all the harbours of the Morini, it was called by that name in the Middle Ages; because in the Middle Ages it was a frequented port; because, assuming that Cæsar's ships could have assembled and remained there for a few weeks in safety, it was the most convenient port from which he could have started; because this assumption is justified by his narrative, as well as by the strong probability that in his time, the port of Wissant was a spacious harbour in the true sense of the word, and by the certainty that it was sheltered by two great flanking promontories, that the beach was convenient, and that there was abundant fresh water near; because Wissant was the nearest port to Britain, and because the promontory under the shelter of which it lay was called Cape Itius.'

We must confess that all of these reasons seem to us more or less unsound. The evidence of Strabo proves nothing that we can see. The fact that Wissant was called *Portus*

Itius by two mediæval chronicles equally proves nothing ; such identifications are common enough in many mediæval writers and are merely antiquarian guesses. The fact that it was in mediæval times a 'frequented port' is, strictly speaking, not a fact at all. The place was unquestionably used during a certain part of the Middle Ages, but the contemporary references to it which have been collected by French scholars show that it was neither a town nor a harbour, but an open beach which travellers in a hurry could use with a favourable wind. So far as we can judge, it was never in mediæval times 'a spacious harbour in the 'true sense of the word' or a place where a really large fleet could assemble and conveniently remain in safety for a few weeks, and we see no reason whatsoever for the assumption that it was anything of the sort in Cæsar's time. How much of the Grey and White Noses may have been swept away in the last nineteen centuries we cannot profess to judge, but it is to be observed that a topographical argument is usually in a parlous case when it is forced to appeal to the sea. And even if these two promontories did extend really far beyond their present positions, they would not have rendered Wissant a safe and commodious harbour. We believe the place to have been in Cæsar's time what it was when it gained its mediæval name of White Sand and what it visibly is to-day, an open sandy beach with an expanse of sand dunes behind it. That is no suitable character for Cæsar's Portus Itius.

There is, we are convinced, only one place on the whole coastline from which Cæsar can really have started, and that is Boulogne. The aspect of Boulogne harbour has of course altered immensely since Roman days, but its earlier condition is not altogether beyond recovery. It was the estuary of a little river running out on to a coast which the west wind and the tide heaped unceasingly with sand, and the picture of it is preserved by one or two estuaries (for instance, Étapes) on the same coast. Mr. Holmes objects to Boulogne because it agrees far less well than Wissant with the sea-mileage given by Cæsar and is further from the Kentish coast ; because, secondly, its ancient name was Gessoriacum ; and because, thirdly, Cæsar did not need the convenience of a harbour. We do not attach much importance to these objections. Cæsar may easily have miscalculated the length of his voyages, and the geographer Strabo, writing shortly after Cæsar, actually mentions a distance which suits Boulogne, and does not suit Wissant.

The question of the name is a greater puzzle, but it is after all a puzzle rather than an objection. If the place was a very small one in Cæsar's time, he might reasonably have preferred to call it by a descriptive term like *Portus Itius*, the harbour near Grisnez, rather than employ an obscure name of which none of his readers would ever have heard. The third point we are not sure that we quite understand. It should be remembered that ancient writers habitually omitted unfamiliar place-names from literary narratives, and Cæsar is no exception. Mr. Holmes appears to argue that Cæsar did not need a harbour because he usually beached his ships, and he appeals to a phrase in Cæsar's text to show that Cæsar did beach his ships at the *Portus Itius*. Of course he did. It was not the practice of any ancient seaman to leave his ships swinging at anchor while in harbour. If Cæsar used (as we think) the estuary which is now Boulogne harbour, we may be sure that he beached his ships there. And we may add that, if the estuary in his time was anything like what we have suggested, he could have done nothing else.

Let us now pass across Gaul from west to east, from the port on the English Channel to the bridge across the Rhine. The matter perhaps interests ourselves less than that which we have just considered: to the historian it is a good deal more important, and to the local antiquary it is all-absorbing. The dwellers by the Rhine have disputed the place of Cæsar's bridge nearly as fiercely as those famous townships in the Italian Romagna who went to law to settle where Cæsar forded the Rubicon. Mr. Holmes treats the matter briefly. He decides that Cæsar's bridge, or rather bridges—for there were two near together—were somewhere between Coblenz and Andernach. We are glad to agree with him that this is the most probable district, and we have some hope that recent finds, not yet complete, may point us out the exact spot. The discoveries to which we refer have been made by skilful excavation on the west bank of the Rhine close to Neuwied. Here spade and dredge have combined to reveal an ancient camp of stately proportions, situate on the very edge of the Rhine and surrounded on the land side by a semicircular line of defences, a palisade or wooden wall and double ditch more than a mile in length. Remains found in this camp show that the site was occupied in Cæsar's time and long before and after: in particular a small square fort, unquestionably later than the larger camp, can be referred to the reign of Augustus. The inference lies near that the

larger camp is actually Cæsar's work, a part of the *magnæ munitiones* which he mentions as protecting each end of his bridge. In the river itself the piles of a bridge have actually been found, and there are said to be traces of another bridge at no great distance which there seems reason to consider Roman. The proof of the whole is not yet perfect. Provoking pieces of prehistoric pottery have been found lying in the soil where they ought not to lie, and tempt one to date the camp long ages before Cæsar. But its general character is certainly not that of a prehistoric work. Here our sympathies at least must be on the side of Cæsar. It would be too cruel if the glory of first bridging the Rhine were transferred from him to some unknown builder of the Stone or Copper Age. There are sadly few remains in Gaul which can be traced to Cæsar's rule. He did his work: he conquered the land. But the Civil War broke out at once, and he never again had a chance of attempting that reconstruction which must follow every conquest. His death, indeed, cut short many plans which extended far beyond the organisation of Gaul.

Abundant guesses have been hazarded respecting those plans. It is always pleasant to set the fancy roaming among the unexpressed and unfulfilled intentions of great men. But it is not profitable. Those unuttered thoughts are amongst the most precious treasures in the abyss of lost things, but they are gone irretrievably and no ingenuity will ever recover them for us. Perhaps, after all, the attractiveness of the search for them is not much affected thereby, for the searcher after these lost schemes does not really search: he tells us, modestly and indirectly, what Cæsar would have done, had he been Cæsar. We shall not try, therefore, to guess what plans Cæsar might have formed for the future of Gaul. We know this much, that he left the country divided into two provincial administrations. One was the old Provincia Narbonensis, to which he annexed Massilia and its territory. The other was coextensive with his conquests and included all the rest of Gaul—a huge area which he can hardly have meant to leave permanently as one single province. We know further that he planted at least two 'colonies' of time-expired soldiers in Narbonensis, and thus, and perhaps in other less important ways, increased the element of Roman burgesses in its population. Similarly in the northern province he conferred the Roman franchise on loyal chieftains and tied them thus closer to Rome: he is said even to have admitted a few Romanised Gauls into

the Roman Senate, to the scandal of all decent old-fashioned senators. But his work was the conquest, not the organisation, of Gaul, and the conquest at least was complete. There remained, no doubt, discontent and unrest in many corners and outlying districts, but there was no open and general rising. Neither in the most dangerous and doubtful moments of the Civil War, nor amid the quarrels of his successors after Cæsar's death, did the Gauls combine to reclaim the freedom so lately lost. Cæsar's admirers tell us that they had been conciliated by Cæsar's kindness. Perhaps rather they had been decimated by Cæsar's pitiless sword.

The real organiser of Gaul was not Cæsar, but his adopted son and heir, Augustus. It was a long and weary task. First, it was necessary to subdue some tribes which had been left only half conquered by Cæsar or had become unquiet and disobedient. There was fighting, at various dates, in the north between Boulogne and Brussels, in the east round Trier, in the extreme south-west among the deep shadowy valleys of the Pyrenees. The process of organisation was still more complex and difficult, and required for a considerable space of time the presence of Augustus himself. Then the great scheme, pursued through many years, for conquering the land between the Rhine and the Elbe, added fresh complications. We can hardly say that Gaul was finally settled till Augustus was dead and cold in his grave. But it is not impossible to extract from this long chain of events the special system which Augustus devised for the internal government of Gaul, and to consider it, by itself, as the final chapter in the history of the conquest.

The government of a Roman province was a simpler thing than perhaps it sounds. Very few Roman officials were required for it: a governor with his staff, such troops as occasion demanded, and perhaps a few underlings, very likely slaves or freedmen, managing the imperial custom-houses on the provincial frontiers. The governor was both civil and military administrator: he kept down disorder and disaffection, held law courts for Romans living in the province, and ensured the due payment of the provincial tribute. Unless grave scandal called for his interference, he took no direct part in the local administration: that was left to the natives, who by their own officials provided their own town councils or Rural District Boards, their own local magistrates and police, and all other requirements of local government. The Romans did not tolerate Home Rule; they did not allow their provinces the freedom which we allow to our great



colonies, but they conceded local autonomy beyond any parallel on record. In consequence, the important feature in the organisation of a province was the establishment of adequate local authorities. In some provinces this was easy. In Greece, for example, the Romans found an accepted and well-understood system in existence; the whole country was divided amongst various cities, and each city had its recognised constitution and officials. In Gaul the case was not quite so simple.

The question, as it met Augustus, was somewhat as follows. History and geography had combined to divide the land into two distinct halves. There was, first, Gallia Narbonensis. It was distinct in climate from all northern Gaul; it had been a Roman possession for a hundred years; it contained Roman municipalities, *coloniæ* of Roman citizens, some founded by Cæsar, more added by Augustus; some of its Gallic inhabitants had acquired the Roman franchise, and the Roman civilisation was familiar throughout it. Its native government had been cantonal, and this was apparently accepted, for better or worse, when the province was first formed. But things had advanced since then: the natives had learnt town life, and Augustus reorganised the province by destroying nearly all the old cantons and substituting the Italian town system. That system meant a town having a municipal constitution—senate and magistrates—self-governing, and possessing outside its walls a dependent territory which might measure fifty miles across. In southern Gaul, according to the reform of Augustus, the territories of the old cantons became the territories of new municipalities, and these new municipalities were created sometimes as homes for time-expired legionaries, and sometimes were the old cantonal capitals transformed. The change was not carried through in one day; it took many years to complete, but it owed its origin and a great deal of its realisation to Augustus.

But Gaul beyond the Cevennes was another matter. This vast area was a recent conquest. It was still divided into the old native tribes or cantons. It contained only one Roman municipality. Few of its inhabitants were familiar with Roman civilisation, and fewer held the Roman franchise. It was unfit for town life or for a local government based upon towns. Augustus accepted the situation. For administrative convenience he broke the area into three provinces, the '*Tres Galliæ*,' as they were commonly called. He established one capital for the three, at the junction of

Saône and Rhone, in the great trading city of Lugudunum, which is now Lyons. The place had become a Roman municipality soon after Cæsar's death; it was the only one in the Three Gauls, and by character and position was well suited to be a capital. In the rest of the three provinces Augustus established no Italian municipalities. He allowed the cantons to continue, and only regulated their number and character. Henceforward there were about sixty; their ruling bodies were the old native nobles, and from these nobles the magistrates of the cantons were chosen by their own peers.

The local autonomy thus conceded to the Three Gauls is probably without a parallel even in the Roman world, and our readers may be inclined to call it a dangerous device, adopted to save Augustus trouble. But that clear-sighted man did not miscalculate. He established a stable form of local government, and he did it, as his fashion was, with the least possible violation of the existing order. Thus he left the Gauls free from the vexatious interference of alien officials, and he gave their nobles back some shadow of their old political power. No friction generated an anti-Roman sentiment among the Gauls, and the inevitable power of Roman civilisation and culture asserted itself upon them. In latent brain-power, in speech, and probably in blood for race and language do sometimes go together, whatever our latest lights may seem to show—the Gauls were not far removed from the Italians. They were well able to appreciate and adopt Italian civilisation and to raise themselves to its level; they had, indeed, begun to show this capacity before the organisation of Augustus, and it must have been apparent to him.

But Augustus went a step further. He established a system which directly attracted the people of the Three Gauls to Roman ways. This system was connected with that cult which seems so strange to us, the worship of the Emperor. It is difficult for us to understand how a human being can be accounted a god: it was not difficult for the men of a polytheistic age, amply supplied with gods of the most various ancestry. Even in the Middle Ages, for instance, in the inner history of that extraordinary prince Frederic II., '*Stupor mundi et immutator mirabilis*,' we meet the tendency obscurely peeping out. At Rome the cult began with Cæsar. His personality and his achievements set him in many men's eyes above a human level, and won him the title of 'god' from more than private

flattery. In the East, accustomed from of old to worship monarchs, this deification seemed most natural; possibly, indeed, it was the East that first suggested it. The West was more reserved, but after Cæsar's death Augustus styled himself *Divi Filius*, 'son of a god,' and in the provinces, both Eastern and Western, he instituted an official worship of Augustus and Roma. He did not call himself a god: that was not the way of that cool, cynical man; but he put forward this cult as an instrument to cast a religious glamour round the relation of the provincials to Rome. And, indeed, the achievements of Augustus had been such that men might well join Horace and Virgil in thinking and calling him a god. Nowhere did this cult flourish so well as in the Three Gauls. The centre of it was the capital, Lugudunum. There, close to the confluence of Rhone and Saône, stood a temple and an altar of great splendour—fragments of it have been dug up from time to time beneath the modern town—and there once a year the sixty cantons sent chosen representatives, a high priest was instituted, sacrifices were offered, and games held in much state. The old rivalry of the Gaulish tribes woke anew in a more pacific sphere; they contended eagerly which canton should furnish the high priest, and who should win distinction at the accompanying games, and they recorded the results in a stately series of inscriptions on huge ostentatious blocks of well-hewn stone. Not only their intellect but their ambition was enlisted in the cause of Rome.

In one point only did the Romans trample on a Gaulish custom. They put down Druidism. Augustus forbade any Gaul who held the Roman franchise to be also a Druid; the second and fourth Emperors, Tiberius and Claudius, struck sharper blows. The action was not, as it seems, political, but rather social. The Druids practised secret magical arts, and offered, or were thought to offer, human sacrifices. These things were an abomination to the Romans, and the government forbade them, as our government has forbidden *suttee* in India. Druidism itself survived; there were Druids even in the fourth century. But it had lost its secrecy and its more barbaric elements; the spread of Roman civilisation further weakened it, and the fourth-century Druids of Gaul were literary fictions like the nineteenth-century Druids of Wales.

The local autonomy allowed to the Gauls had, of course, its disadvantages. Some price had to be paid for the immense benefits which it secured. The Gaulish chieftains,

thus left semi-independent, failed once or twice to realise their exact position. There was an isolated outbreak early in the reign of Tiberius; there was a more concerted move during the troubles which beset the Empire, and the Gallic provinces in particular, after the downfall and death of Nero. But it is significant that the leaders in each case were Gauls who were also citizens of Rome with Roman names, and their intentions, whatever they were, do not seem to have included a national restoration of the old Celtic life and language and liberty. Speedily and surely the Roman influences permeated Gaul; the Roman language spread, at least among the nobles and the traders; the conquest concluded in a fusion of peoples, and to this day the curious traveller finds in Gaul more numerous and more stately memorials of Roman life than even in the classic land of Italy itself. We shall not now describe those memorials, much as they deserve description. It is enough at present to have traced the history of the conquest—commenced by commercial greed, continued by desperate fighting, completed by wise toleration. It was Cæsar's glory to win Gaul: it was the glory of Augustus to keep it, to appreciate profoundly the capacity of one European race to assimilate with another and, with quiet carelessness of externals, to offer the conquered a possible and even an enjoyable administration.

- ART. VIII.—1. *China*. No. 3 (1900). Correspondence respecting the Insurrectionary Movement in China. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, &c. July 1900.
2. *China the Long-lived Empire*. By ELIZA RUHAMAH SCIDMORE. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1900.
3. *China and the Present Crisis*. By JOSEPH WALTON, M P. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., 1900.
4. *The New Far East*. By ARTHUR DIÓSY. London: Cassell & Co., 1898.
5. *World Politics at the End of the Nineteenth Century as influenced by the Oriental Situation*. By PAUL S. REINSCH, Asst. Professor in the Wisconsin University. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1900.

A FEW hurried prefatory remarks are all that need be devoted to the books enumerated in the foregoing list. Events have followed each other too rapidly in China for any book written a few months ago to be of much use to those who investigate the present situation. Their authors—those who have personal experiences to narrate—depict the conditions prevailing up to the time of the recent outburst of anti-foreign animosity, but they neither describe the latter nor prepare us to expect it. Mrs. Scidmore's book is an interesting account of what she saw and heard in China, and has the merit of being the work of one who has frequently visited the country. Mr. Joseph Walton presents us with a brief and clearly written narrative of a journey through China, which was much too rapidly made to give him time for close observation. The book is to some extent a party pamphlet, in which Lord Salisbury is charged with weakness and negligence as Minister for Foreign Affairs. As no attempt is made to prove the charges, their formulation must be taken as merely a statement of Mr. Walton's opinion on very intricate questions, to the study of which he does not pretend to have devoted any very special attention. Mr. Diósy's 'New Far East' is a much more important work. He exhibits signs of a very unusual capacity for understanding the genius of the Far Eastern nations. As is natural and becoming in a founder and vice-president of the Japan Society, he shows himself to be an admirer of the Japanese and a believer in the grandeur of their future; but he does not allow his admiration to obscure his judgement or prevent his pointing out defects

where they exist. Professor Reinsch's little volume on 'World Politics'—a literal but not very convenient translation of 'Welt-Politik,' an expression made in Germany—is a work of great value. Indeed, small as the volume is, it deserves to have a whole review to itself. It is an attempt, and we may say a successful attempt, to put before us a plain and striking survey of international politics at the present day. The importance of the questions now raised in China is perceived and explained by the author, who tells us that 'the whole material of the book is focussed upon the Chinese problem.'

In one respect the history of the recent troubles in China conforms to that of other great catastrophes. Till the very eve of the outbreak it had been as unforeseen by those most nearly concerned as the sequel of his feast had been by Belshazzar the King, 'his princes, his wives, and his 'concubines,' or as the great earthquake of Lisbon by the dwellers on the banks of the Tagus. Alarming predictions were, indeed, printed\* in some English newspapers published in China; but no importance either was, or need be, attributed to them. Similar predictions had appeared in the same quarter year after year for a long period, and nothing had come of them; whilst those who made them gave the best proof of their disbelief in their own predictions by abstaining from taking any special measures for the security of their families, their property, or themselves. In a country like the Chinese Empire, with its effete and corrupt government, every prediction of trouble is necessarily invested with some appearance of plausibility; and nearly every foreigner feels himself invited to pose as a prophet, though he may be without any authentic information and not given to observing closely the progress of affairs.

Travellers who have lately visited Peking give an account of the life of the foreign community in that city, which in no way indicated any apprehension on the part of its members that they were living, and indeed dancing, above a volcano. 'They have their club, the tennis-courts of 'which are flooded and roofed over as a skating rink, their 'spring and autumn races at a track beyond the walls, 'frequent garden parties and picnics in the open seasons, 'and a busy round of State dinners and balls all winter.†

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\* It may be mentioned that they were derided at the time in a German paper, the 'Ost-Asiatische Lloyd.'

† China the Long-lived Empire, pp. 145-6.

In his recently published work, 'The "Overland" to China,' Mr. Archibald Colquhoun let us know till how late a date life in Peking was thus conditioned. Mr. Walton more than once noted the civil demeanour of the people towards foreigners.\* The most remarkable confirmation of the general feeling of security is to be found in official documents. It is hardly too much to say that the authors of these draw an idyllic picture of the prosperity and tranquillity of North-Eastern China in the first half of the current year. The publications of the Imperial Maritime Customs are as a rule rather prosaic in style than poetic, but the following extract from the 'Report on the Foreign Trade of China for the Year 1899' suggests a comparison with a pastoral poem:—

'The foreign trade of China during the year 1899 was characterised by an astonishing developement, and merchants, both foreign and native, made handsome profits in almost every branch. The political situation, although still unsettled, gave rise to no immediate fears; exchange remained remarkably steady; the rice crop was abundant; the spring weather during the critical period for the silkworms was unusually favourable; and except for a recrudescence of piracy on the West River [in the South], there were no disturbances to check trade. The gratifying result was that the year beat all previous records, and showed an advance without precedent. . . . The internal trade of the country was also unusually brisk, and the important changes which will be brought about by the extension of railways have already been proved. Newchwang and Tientsin have promptly responded to the stimulus of better means of communication, and the trade at those ports has leapt forward, although the former suffered from a severe outbreak of plague. It is found that immediately trains begin to run, districts through which there was comparatively little traffic, such as between Paoting and Peking, suddenly commence to hum with life and activity, and there suddenly springs up a flourishing trade which was formerly undreamt of and impossible for want of cheap transport.'

The above is dated March 6, 1900. The report of H.M. Consul at Tientsin on the trade of that port, though couched in less glowing terms, is equally cheerful. It was presented to Parliament in July last, having been received at the Foreign Office on June 19, and having apparently been written in May 1900—a date which, in view of what has occurred since, is worth remembering.

'The trade of Tientsin,' says the Consul, 'shows a very satisfactory advance in every direction . . . In 1899 the improvement on 1889 was more than 150 per cent. . . . It is astonishing to see the move-

ment of goods and passengers which has followed on the construction of the railroad which was built mainly for military purposes to Shan-haikwan and Chinchou. . . . The long trains on the line are packed with Chinese passengers, and carry many trucks of miscellaneous produce, in addition to the coal put out from the mines at Tangshan and Liu Si. . . . The increase in the trade has naturally extended to the shipping trading to this port, and the total tonnage for 1899 is 250,000 tons over that of 1898.'

The picture was not without its shadows, though these were believed to be due to only passing clouds. 'Brigandage' generally exists in autumn and winter.' In the previous year (1898) the brigands had been unusually bold and active.

'Eventually the leaders were captured, and at least 100 of their followers were put to death. The institution of train bands in the villages under the supervision of the military officers did much to affect this result.'

Other shadows were reported:—

'A sect known by foreigners as the "Boxers" had spread from the neighbouring province of Shantung into Chihli, wrecking chapels and the houses of converts, and demanding ransom for prisoners and their property.'

**The Boxers are**

'considered to be actuated by patriotic motives and in some way to be opposing foreign encroachments on their country.'

Even the shadow cast by them was thought likely to pass away soon:—

'The spread of the sect is undoubtedly due in a large measure to the absence of rain, which is ascribed to the evil acts of foreigners, and owing to which the country people are without occupation, as they have been unable to get any seed into the ground for spring crops. There is reason to hope that the fall of rain may send the people to their farms and prevent the movement assuming any serious proportions.'

The proceedings of the Boxers had forced themselves on the attention of the representatives of foreign Powers in Peking. On December 30, 1899, Mr. Brooks, an English missionary in Shantung, was attacked and wounded by a 'band of red-turbaned "Boxer" rebels'—the description being that adopted by the Tsung-li-Yamên—and on the following day was murdered by them. Strong representations having been addressed to it by Sir Claude MacDonald, supported by the Ministers of France, Germany, and the United States, the Chinese Government took measures for



the punishment of the perpetrators of this outrage. The foreign Ministers were not, however, satisfied of the sincerity of the Chinese authorities as regarded their duty of putting an end to outrages and menaces directed against Christians and foreigners, and further representations were made. On April 16 Sir Claude MacDonald telegraphed and wrote that in his opinion the Central Government was at last showing a genuine desire to suppress the Anti-Christian Society of Boxers. In this he seems to have had the concurrence of his colleagues, and, up to this point, and apparently till a considerably later date, the representative of every foreign country in Peking had no apprehension of an approaching convulsion.

It is of importance that this be borne in mind. It shows that every legation in China was without information as to the real state of affairs, and that all were equally in the dark as to the future, even the near future. In the first half of March the Ministers of Great Britain, the United States, France, Germany, and Italy had agreed to recommend that a naval demonstration should be made in North Chinese waters; but, as it was to be confined to 'a few ships of each 'nationality,' it is evident that the object was rather to put pressure on the Chinese Government to suppress the anti-foreign secret societies which were causing disturbances in Shantung and Chihli, than to give security against serious general danger. The recommendation was not submitted in a form suggesting urgency. Our own Government hesitated to comply with it, and that of the United States declined to associate itself with any such action.

If there were any foreigners in China who might have been credited with a knowledge of imminent popular movements, it would have been the missionaries of the different Christian sects. They were, however, but little better, or, at any rate, but little earlier informed than the consuls or the diplomatists. As far back as January, indeed, Bishop Scott communicated to Sir Claude MacDonald the contents of a telegram which he had received from one of his clergy, who reported the 'outlook very black,' and that there was 'constant danger.' As far as can be seen, however, the anti-Christian movement, serious as it was, was not expected to assume greater dimensions than earlier agitations—for example, that of the so-called 'Vegetarians,' some six or seven years ago. In May the French Roman Catholic missionaries became seriously alarmed. On the 19th of that month Mgr. Favier, Vicar-Apostolic of Peking, addressed to

the French envoy, M. Pichon, a letter, from which the following is extracted :—

‘The situation daily becomes more and more serious and threatening. In the Prefecture of Paoting-fu more than seventy Christians have been massacred, three other neophytes have been cut to pieces. Several villages have been looted and burned, and a great number of others have been completely deserted. Over 2,000 Christians are fugitives, being without food, clothes, or shelter. In Peking alone about 400 refugees—men, women, and children—have already been given shelter by us and the Sisters of Charity; in another week’s time we shall probably have several thousands to look after; we shall be obliged to disband the schools, colleges, and all the hospitals, to make room for these unfortunate people. On the east pillage and incendiarism are imminent; we receive more and more alarming news every hour. Peking is surrounded on all sides; the Boxers are daily approaching the capital, being only delayed by their measures for exterminating all Christians. . . . The religious persecution is only a blind; the main object is to exterminate the Europeans, and this object is clearly indicated and written on the Boxers’ standards. Their accomplices in Peking are awaiting them; they are to begin by an attack on the churches and are finally to assault the legations.’ (‘China.’ No. 3 (1900), p. 108.)

This report was communicated by M. Pichon to all his colleagues through the Spanish Minister as doyen of the diplomatic body. Reports of a similar character began to come in from other missionaries. It might have been expected that the foreign Ministers would feel that they were confronted by a crisis of the utmost gravity. As Sir Claude MacDonald wrote on May 21, 1900, ‘The long-continued ‘impunity accorded to the Boxers’ organisation and the ‘supineness and procrastination which the Government ‘had displayed in face of the constantly repeated representations of the foreign Ministers’ had borne their natural fruit. The Boxers had become too strong to be suppressed. They had their patrons, secret or avowed, amongst the higher officials and even in the Palace itself.

If we wanted further proof of the fact that it is impossible for foreigners in China—even those of great experience—to form a correct estimate of the extent and tendency of a popular movement or of the real sentiments of the native authorities, we have it in the record of a meeting held on the afternoon of May 20 at the instance of M. Pichon. The day, it is to be specially noted, was the one immediately following that on which Mgr. Favier had written. All the eleven foreign envoys in Peking attended the meeting. They were practically unanimous in the opinion

that the circumstances were not such as to justify the bringing up of legation guards. The German Minister 'thought that the most effective means of bringing pressure ' on the Government would be by a concentration of ships ' near Shan-haikwan, from which parties could be landed, ' if necessary, to march for the protection of foreigners in ' Peking.' The German Minister, whose lamentable fate has yet to be told, was quite aware that from no possible combination of ships in Chinese waters could a force equal to an ordinary brigade of troops be landed. He must have felt fully confident that the communications with the coast of a landing party on its way to Peking would not be molested. It is no wonder, therefore, that our own Minister was 'convinced that a few days' heavy rainfall, to terminate ' the long continued drought which has helped largely to ' excite unrest in the country districts, would do more to ' restore tranquillity than any measures which either the ' Chinese Government or foreign Governments could take.' It is creditable to Sir Claude MacDonald's perspicacity that he pointed out that, as this could not be counted upon, his ' judgement as to the probability of continued security must ' be suspended ' until the Chinese Government showed by its action whether or not it had the will or the power to do its duty.

On May 28 the Boxers burnt some of the railway stations—one only six miles from Peking—together with machine sheds and houses of European employés. They tore up the line in places, and interrupted railway communication between the capital and Tientsin. Our Minister described the situation as 'serious.' At a meeting held on the same day the foreign representatives unanimously decided to send for guards for the legations, 'in view of the apathy of the ' Chinese Government and the gravity of the situation.' Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Seymour, whose perception of the true nature of the position was considerably in advance of that of others, had already sent H.M. ships 'Orlando' and 'Algerine' to Taku, 'ready to land guards if required by ' Minister.' On May 31 he started himself for Taku with two more ships, ordering other two to follow him. On the same day marine guards of the American, French, Russian, Japanese, Italian, and British legations, numbering 340 men, of whom 75 were British, arrived in Peking. Three days later the German and Austrian legation guards reached the capital. They were only just in time. Railway communication between Tientsin and Peking was finally cut on

June 4. For some time it had been kept open, intermittently and with difficulty, by parties of British marines from Tientsin.

Murders of Western missionaries and native Christians, destruction of chapels, and attacks on foreigners employed in connexion with the railways had become frequent. The acquiescence of the Imperial Government, or—to speak more correctly—its complicity, in these outrages now hardly admitted of doubt. On June 5 Sir Claude MacDonald reported that, when he personally inquired at the Tsung-li-Yamên concerning the murder of two English missionaries, the Chinese officials ‘displayed the greatest indifference.’ Our Minister now cherished no illusion as to the loyalty of the Imperial Government. His well-grounded conclusions on the subject were not shared by all his colleagues. On this very same June 5 M. Delcassé informed Sir Edward Monson that the ‘latest telegrams from M. Pichon represented that he considered that for the moment all imminent ‘danger was over.’ This optimism did not last long. A day later Sir Claude MacDonald found that his colleagues agreed that, ‘owing to the now evident sympathy of the Empress-Dowager and the more conservative of her advisers with ‘the anti-foreign movement, the situation is rapidly growing ‘more serious.’

Sir Edward Seymour, anticipating a crisis of exceptional gravity, had got the senior naval officers of the French, German, Italian, Russian, Austrian, United States, and Japanese forces to meet on board his flagship and arrange for concerted action if necessary. He telegraphed to England recommending that troops should be sent up to Tientsin from Hong-Kong, and kept H.M.S. ‘Terrible’ ready to convey them. Soon urgent demands for relief came from Peking, which made it plain that no time was to be lost. The Admiral ascertained that all or most of the foreign officers present off the Peiho would agree to a sudden march on Peking under his command, with a Russian colonel as chief of the staff. This was in effect the suggestion of Baron von Ketteler, the German Minister, made on May 21.

On June 8 a telegram was despatched from London to Sir Edward Seymour authorising him to carry out his proposal. When we remember the difference of longitude between London and Tientsin and the consequent shortening of the time interval, we can see that the authorisation was acted upon with surprising celerity. An allied force was

landed and started towards Peking at 9.30 A.M. on the 10th. When completed this force amounted to 1,768 of all ranks—viz. 915 English, 112 Americans, 112 Russians, 54 Japanese, 40 Italians, 25 Austrians, 450 Germans, and 100 French. The circumstances in which the expedition was undertaken have to be noted. An urgent, almost despairing appeal for relief had been received from the legations in the capital. No member of these legations and no foreign consul at Tientsin—that is to say, no one whose official position enabled him to have any knowledge concerning the state of the country, or to whose opinion on the subject any weight would be ascribed—had expressed the smallest misgiving as to the sufficiency of the force now landed and on its way. The German Minister, whose mistrust of the Chinese Government seems to have been deeper than that of his colleagues, had been the proposer of a relief expedition such as that just organised, though he believed it might proceed by a longer route—viz. from Shan-haikwan, and would be strong enough if landed from even the smaller number of ships at first assembled off the coast of Chihli. The general belief in the minds of those most concerned and most likely to be well informed was that, however sympathetic with the Boxers the Chinese Government might be, it would not physically oppose the relief expedition, and would probably use that expedition's appearance to moderate in its own interest the ferocious energy of its friends.

We shall have to call further attention before we conclude to the impossibility of penetrating the designs of Chinese officials, or of perceiving the drift of popular sentiment, experienced by the representatives of every nationality stationed in the country. The officers of the allied forces, naturally and, it may be said, properly, accepted the view of the situation adopted by those who had the best or only means of knowing it. They expected obstruction and even forcible opposition on the part of the Boxers. They looked for no active help from the Chinese regular troops; but they believed that their own numbers were sufficient—as they undoubtedly were—to deal effectually with any opposition which those troops did not actively support. Unless the 'red-turbaned Boxer rebels' were helped, or secretly encouraged to sever them, the allies' communications with their base at Tientsin were secure. On June 11 an event, significant in itself and in the manner in which it occurred, took place in Peking. Mr. Sugiyama, Chancellor of the

Japanese Legation, was murdered by soldiers belonging to the army commanded by General Tung-fuh-Siang.

In the meantime the allied expedition pushed on. Beyond Yangtsun—less than a third of the way to the capital—it found the railway seriously injured. Bridges had been partially burned, and in many places rails had been torn up and sleepers burned or removed. The expedition got as far as Lang-fang. Its communications with Tientsin, though precarious, remained open till the 15th.\* On the 14th the Boxers were first encountered. Some hundreds of them advanced to within short range of a train, which had stopped to water the engine, a work of great difficulty, the allied seamen having to pass buckets from hand to hand. The intention of the Boxers seems to have been to cut off small parties. Fire was opened on them from rifles and a Maxim gun, and, though they behaved with extraordinary courage, they were eventually driven off with loss. In various encounters with the Boxers it was found that, though they carried swords and spears, they had no fire-arms. This fact and the fanatical bravery with which they faced magazine-rifle and machine-gun fire go far to prove that a superstitious belief in the efficacy of the spells and incantations accompanying initiation into their society had led them to feel confident of invulnerability and invincibility.

They closed in round the expeditionary force, attacked its rear, and completed the destruction of the railway behind it. The position of the allies had now become serious. Owing to the slow rate of their advance and the impossibility of receiving supplies from Tientsin, their provisions were running short, and their ammunition had been considerably diminished. The Boxers were hanging on their flanks and rear looking for opportunities to pounce upon small detachments. Tung-fuh-Siang's troops were between them and Peking. General Nieh's army was between them and Tientsin. The attitude of the former was no longer doubtful, as news of Mr. Sugiyama's murder had reached the allied commanders. The attitude of Nieh's army might be deduced from the persistent omission of any effort on its part to prevent the Boxers from cutting the line of railway. It is easy to see what the policy of the Chinese was. They

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\* An interesting account of the proceedings of the expedition by Mr. W. Whittall, who accompanied it as *Reuter's* correspondent, was published in the '*Daily News*' of August 21, 1900.

had created an opportunity of getting the whole of the foreign representatives and their compatriots in Peking, and also the allied expeditionary force, into their power. Of this opportunity they were about to avail themselves to the full extent. To have destroyed or blockaded the relief expedition and forced it into surrender by starvation, would have greatly weakened the allied forces at Tientsin, Taku, and off the mouth of the Peiho. The small squadron in the river would probably have to withdraw. Tientsin would be occupied, the Taku forts put in a state of defence, and the stream obstructed with mines.

This promising plan, if executed, would greatly retard the approach of the punitive army, which the Powers might be expected to send. Only a few days would be necessary to carry it out completely. In that space of time China would be able to organise her forces, now armed with the best modern weapons, in enormous numbers, and work up to a fever heat all over the country the anti-foreign feeling of which the Boxers' Society was the chief exponent. An immediate advantage gained by China would be delay. Little as foreign nations know about the workings of the Chinese mind, the Chinese know a great deal about foreign nations. Their rulers were fully aware of the international rivalries and covert hostility of one towards another which lurk ill-concealed beneath the so-called concert of the Powers. In no place had these rivalries and this hostility been more cynically displayed than in Peking itself.\* Given but a moderate amount of time, they must have argued, and one Power more eager at the moment to get all the advantage for itself which may be hoped for from injuring another will upset the whole concert. Fortunately—we cannot exaggerate the good fortune attending on their decision—the senior naval officers of the allies remaining in the Peiho and off the bar decided on taking a step which completely frustrated the Chinese plan. They demanded the surrender, and in case of refusal determined to attempt the capture, of the Taku forts.

We may reasonably feel sympathy with the Chinese officer in command of these works of defence. He had not had time to complete the arrangements which, should the

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\* The depths of vulgarity to which international animosity can make highly placed European personages descend, are revealed by Mr. Archibald Colquhoun in his book 'The "Overland" to China,' pp. 183-6. Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

small allied force venture to attack them, would probably have ensured at least the temporary success of the fortifications. He could not, compatibly with military honour, to which Chinese commanders, fellow-countrymen of the brave Admiral Ting, are far from being universally insensible, comply with the allies' demand. He did the best thing under the circumstances. He opened fire first. This did not avail him much. He paid the penalty incurred by even the brave and loyal when they serve a treacherous and corrupt Government. His fire was vigorously returned by the Russian, French, German, and English small craft in the river. These vessels had twenty-six officers and men killed and sixty-two wounded. The loss of the Chinese garrisons was much heavier. Storming parties were landed, and, without any very considerable loss, completed the defeat and capture of the forts.

Up to the 18th, the day following the capture, no act of overt hostility had been committed by the Chinese regular troops against the allied expeditionary force. The time for such had not come. That the Chinese were preparing for offensive operations was made evident by the fact that troops and Boxers combined made a vigorous attack on the foreign settlement at Tientsin on the 17th, directly after the forts had fallen. Next day General Tung's troops, as well as some of the Boxers, attacked Admiral Seymour's column, and were repulsed. On the same day, viz. on the 18th,\* Baron von Ketteler, the German Minister in Peking, was treacherously murdered when on his way to the Tsung-li-Yamên. The miscreants who perpetrated this atrocious crime are declared to have been soldiers—that is to say, were in the service of the Government to which the murdered Minister was accredited. That the moment and, perhaps, the manner of the attack now made on the allied expedition by General Tung's army were determined by the capture of the Taku forts is likely enough; but it would be to ignore all previous revelations of Chinese character, the obvious intention of their generals' movements, and all the probabilities—not to say virtual certainties—of the case, to believe that the aggressive operation undertaken by them was anything more than accelerated by the action of the allies on the lower Peiho.

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\* June 18 seems to have been the real date of this crime. It has, however, been stated that it was perpetrated on the 13th according to our chronology; the 18th being equivalent to that in the Chinese chronology ('Times,' August 31, 1900).



We need not follow the further fortunes of the expeditionary column in detail. It was seen that an advance to Peking was impossible, and that even retirement to Tientsin would be extremely difficult. The stock of provisions and ammunition was now much reduced; replenishment was not to be expected; the only thing to be done by the allies was to fight their way back. With much difficulty and no small loss this was effected. A relief force had been sent out from Tientsin on June 24. It found the expeditionary column a few miles from the city entrenched in an arsenal it had captured, and together with it returned on the 26th. The loss incurred by the column amounted to 44 killed and 228 wounded.

Events of great gravity had taken place in Peking. After the murder of the lamented Baron von Ketteler the several legations were attacked. Apparently there was a difference of opinion in the Palace as to the attitude to be observed towards foreigners. The more hot-headed of the anti-foreign party, largely composed of Manchus and probably led by Prince Tuan, a near relative of the Emperor and father of the latter's heir-designate, were in favour of extermination. Another party opposed this policy, most likely not out of any feeling of compassion for foreigners in terrible distress, nor any regard for the national obligations towards duly accredited envoys; but because to keep them alive and as *détenus* would be to hold possession of a valuable kind of 'material guarantee' that might be very useful in future negotiations. It is, as before indicated, difficult in the extreme to ascertain what Chinese officials really mean or intend, and it is, therefore, only probable that there existed a third party which was sincerely disposed to respect the persons of the envoys, and protect them and the other foreigners in the capital. That Prince Ching, head of the Tsung-li-Yamên, was so disposed is likely enough from what we know of him.

The foreign residents in Peking were now cut off from communication with the outside world. We cannot say that communication with the city no longer existed, for—as if to put its disloyalty beyond dispute and to accentuate its violation of the international rules which even the cannibals of the South Sea Islands respect—the Chinese Government continued to receive messages from, and send them to its officials in the provinces and in foreign countries. We knew that from June 20 a veritable siege of the legations had begun. Their premises had become places of

refuge for the foreign residents, official and unofficial. The great majority had been received in the British Legation. Meagre as was the information concerning proceedings in Peking which reached them, it was enough to inspire the civilised nations of the West with horror and resentment. Doubts of the power, and suspicions of the professed desire, of the Chinese Government to protect foreigners, were all but universal. It is true that an extraordinary and truly blind optimism still prevailed in certain quarters. On June 20 our Ambassador in St. Petersburg reported that 'Count Mouravieff still takes a sanguine view of the situation. . . . His excellency still regards the state of things in Central and Southern China as more threatening, and believes that in a fortnight the crisis will be over.'

The sudden death of Count Mouravieff shortly afterwards checks all intention of criticising him personally; but it is becoming and, indeed, desirable, to note that the words just quoted are on record for the instruction of those who never tire of extolling the superior prescience and astuteness with which the foreign affairs of Russia are conducted. Fortunately a sounder view prevailed elsewhere. On June 19, under directions from London, the Indian Government began preparations for the despatch of a considerable number of troops to China, and Lord Salisbury pointed out to the Government of Japan the critical situation and asked if it was not intended to send more troops to China, also proffering financial assistance. Further, he directed Lord Pauncefoot to suggest to the United States Government the despatch of troops from Manila.

For two months Western nations were kept in a state of harassing uncertainty as to the fate of their fellow-countrymen in Peking. The anguish naturally felt by many who had relatives and friends there was grievously augmented by the duplicity of Chinese officials and the mendacity of European newspapers and telegraph agencies. The mandarins were able to communicate with their Government. Some of the Southern viceroys refused, or claimed credit for having refused, to carry out orders for the destruction of foreigners within their provinces. Scraps of intelligence as to the condition of the legations were allowed to come out. Sometimes it was reported, on Chinese authority, that all were safe. At other times it was stated that not a foreigner had been left alive. Rumours from the treaty-ports were dressed up by 'expanders' of telegrams and published as authentic statements. In the meantime troubles had been spreading.

The foreign settlement at Tientsin was persistently bombarded, and, in fact, was the object of attack for nearly a month, when, foreign troops in considerable numbers having arrived, the native city was assaulted and captured by the allies, so that it might no longer afford a place of arms for the Chinese forces. In Manchuria what looked like a pre-arranged campaign was begun against the Russians, whose army in that quarter was greatly strengthened, and who, after fighting had gone on for several weeks, occupied the city of Newchwang.

Early in July the Southern viceroys issued a proclamation declaring their intention of acting for themselves till authority was restored in the capital. They also engaged to protect foreigners. The magnitude of the task before them was now perceived by the Western Powers and each decided to send considerable forces to China. Owing to the length of time which it was expected would elapse, and which, in fact, did elapse, before some of the continental countries could get their troops to the scene of action, it was urgently necessary that effective steps for the relief of the legations should be taken before the arrival of all the contingents. Great Britain succeeded in getting the consent of Russia and Germany to the despatch of the considerable body of troops which Japan was willing to send. At length all the Powers agreed to this. Russia, who had large numbers of troops in the Far East, had been able to spare a considerable detachment. The wisdom of the naval officers in determining to seize the Taku forts was now made manifest. The road for the advance of a relieving army had been kept clear as far as Tientsin. It is particularly gratifying that the Australian colonies again came forward to support the empire at a grave crisis. They readily consented to the transfer of several ships from Australian waters to the China Station and sent a detachment of men to join the British forces operating there.

A sufficient army having been assembled at Tientsin, a fresh advance on the capital was begun in the first week of August by a force composed of Japanese, Russian, British, American, and French troops.\* On August 12 the allies

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\* The allied forces which took part in forcing the entry into Peking consisted of:—British, 1,832 infantry, 400 cavalry, 13 guns; Russian, 3,300 infantry, 180 cavalry, 22 guns; French, 400 marines, 18 guns; Japanese, 6,600 infantry, 220 cavalry, 53 guns, and 450 engineers; American, 1,600 infantry, 75 cavalry, 6 guns, and 150 marines. (Reuter in the 'Times' of September 1, 1900.) The German detach-

were close to Peking, and early on the 14th the gates were attacked and the city entered during the day. The Ministers and the other surviving foreigners were rescued. The legations had withstood a long and terrible siege. The total loss nearly equalled a fourth of the whole number of foreigners in the city. There were 11 civilians and 54 marines and seamen killed; 19 civilians, 112 marines and seamen, and 2 foreign ladies had been wounded. A more heroic defence, in circumstances so terribly discouraging, than that maintained during two months by the legation guards and the valiant civilians who aided them has seldom, if ever, been recorded. The city had suffered heavily. The following account by Reuter's correspondent, dated August 15, 1900, is impressive:—

‘The aspect of Peking is now one of absolute desolation. The destruction which has taken place is simply appalling. What used to be Legation Street is completely unrecognisable. All the houses of foreigners have been burned, riddled with shells, or blown up. The French Legation, which was one of the finest “compounds” in the city, now shows only a few portions of the walls standing; and even these are like sieves from the fire which was directed against them. The city wall of this legation was first undermined and blown up, and then fired upon. Further along, the Italian Legation is only recognisable from parts of the boundary walls which remain standing. Hundreds of acres of native houses have been burned, and few of those which remain fail to show marks of shot and shell.’\*

We may here break off the narrative which it has been necessary to present to our readers to enable them to understand the state of affairs in China and the possibilities, or indeed probabilities, by which the civilised Powers find themselves confronted. One event, perhaps of great importance as regards future results, has still to be recorded. On August 14—the day on which the rescue expedition entered Peking—General Grodekoff, commanding the Russian forces operating in Manchuria, telegraphed to the Minister of War at St. Petersburg: ‘After hard fighting we have taken possession of the right bank, thus consolidating the great enterprise of annexing the whole of the Amur to Russia’s dominions, and thus making of that river an internal waterway, and not a frontier stream.’† The ‘Official Gazette,’ in which this despatch was published, contained the statement that, when presented to the Tsar,

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ment did not arrive till a day or two after the capital had been entered and the rescue of the legations effected.

\* Times, August 29, 1900.

† Ibid. August 20, 1900.

his Majesty noted on it: 'I sincerely thank the troops for 'their plucky action.' It has to be mentioned that a formal state of war between Russia and China had not been announced, and that the Chinese envoy was still in Russian territory.

Before we can reach any reasonable conclusion on the Chinese question we must recognise one or two facts. The first of these ought to be apparent from the record of occurrences which has been given above. It is that 'Occidentals,' even those most favourably situated for the acquisition of knowledge, have not found it possible to fathom the intentions of Chinese officials or discover what is really working in the public mind. The late terrible eruption of fanatical hatred and hostility was sudden only in the sense that those against whom it was immediately directed did not discern its approach till it was upon them: As Sir Edward Grey said in the debate in the House of Commons of August 2:—

'One cannot but feel how enormously wrong has been the estimate of the state of affairs, with regard to China, which has been made—I do not say by her Majesty's Government alone—but by all the Governments who have been mostly concerned with the question. . . . One cause has been the wrong estimate that has been formed of the condition of China, the idea that China was ripe for partition, that great liberties could be taken, and that large slices of territory could be acquired. That,' he added, 'has brought its own Nemesis.'

It has indeed! The best that can be said for the missionaries, even the Roman Catholic missionaries, is that they made out the danger a few hours sooner than their fellow-Occidentals. Yet it is perfectly certain that the tempest had been long brewing. To mark on the map the places at which disturbances and assaults on native Christians and foreigners, or the latter's property, occurred would be to cover a wide area. The crowds of Boxers who swarmed to Peking and the neighbourhood of the route thence to Tientsin could not, by any permissible figure of speech, be described as drawn from the local population. Many came from places at a considerable distance. The hostile movements of Chinese in Manchuria and the menace of similar movements in Mongolia, which seemed aimed at making the Russian line of railway communication insecure, were simultaneous with the attacks on the Peking-Tientsin line and the assemblage of riotous bands in Chihli.

Serious observers have remarked the inscrutability of the Chinese and the failure of Occidentals to penetrate it. Mrs. Scidmore frankly avows that, 'during seven visits

‘to China in the last fifteen years, the mystery of its people and the enigma of its future have only increased.’ Mr. Arthur Diósy \* tells us how little information of value is to be got from the foreign residents at the treaty ports.

‘There are, probably, no communities,’ he says, ‘residing out of their own countries, so absolutely isolated from the people amongst whom they live, so completely out of touch with native feeling and aspirations, as the European, and to a less extent the American, colonies in the Far East.’

The least acquainted with what is going on around them are, necessarily, the foreign diplomatists. Perhaps it may seem unnecessary to say this after what we have already recorded; but it is so important that some reiteration is excusable. In the immense majority of cases the foreign diplomatist does not make personal acquaintance with China till he has reached a mature age. He spends in it only a few years, a mere fraction of his official career. During his sojourn his chief desire, probably, is to leave it for a more congenial station as soon as he can. He is dependent for information about the country and the people on those whom we have seen know very little about either. The consuls, it is true, spend most of their lives in China; but there is nothing in the history of the last few months to show that they have got to understand the Chinese; whilst it is certain that prolonged residence in China does tend to impair recollection of the fact that there are other countries in the world. We have found how little the missionaries of any sect know of native feeling. This is not surprising when we remember the general principles governing their methods. They work almost exclusively amongst the poorer classes. With the intellectual life of China, except to arouse hostility, they come in contact scarcely at all. There are still, it may be said, the members of the Imperial Maritime Customs’ Service. One of the most discouraging features of the late troubles has been the completeness with which the Chinese have ignored the benefits which this great service has conferred on their country. Even those immediately benefited -- the Imperial Family and the ruling Mandarins -- have exhibited little desire to preserve it. The members of the service foresaw the speedy approach of calamity as little as the other foreign residents.

The problem in China which we have to solve is in its essence double. There are, in truth, two distinct problems.

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\* *The New Far East*, p. 18.

In the first are involved our relations with the Chinese; in the second, our relations with the other Powers having interests in China. In attempting a solution, we should consider the problems separately. It has been explained how completely foreigners failed to discern what was coming, and how impenetrable by them Chinese inscrutability proved to be. Are we then, as long as we remain in China, to continue to live on a volcano which may burst into eruption suddenly and destroy the great interests which have grown up in the country? Not if we go to work in the right way. Inscrutable as he is, the Chinaman is a human being after all. He has 'hands, organs, dimensions, 'senses, affections, passions.' He may well ask, 'If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die?' He puts another question, to which an answer in lurid characters has been written in advance across the 'conventions' and 'concessions' extorted from him of late years. There is now no mistaking the tone in which he asks, 'If you wrong us, shall we not revenge?' As Sir Edward Grey has told us, neglect of facts brings its own Nemesis. The facts of human nature being what they are, and the Chinese being human, the broad and general effect of our behaviour to them can be predicted with reasonable certainty.

As a people, the Chinese are not in the least opposed to commercial intercourse with foreign nations. The increase of trade, as shown in the Customs returns, proves this beyond dispute. As long as we confine ourselves to pure trading with them they are ready to meet us half-way. Here and there a Mandarin, or a member of the literate class from which the Mandarins come, may show his dislike of the intercourse; just as an official of some public department farther west may show his dislike of a movement likely to bring with it a cry for reform. The objector, however, gets little support from the trading public. As a people, too, the Chinese have a national self-consciousness which is but a form of patriotism. The recent outburst, which has caused so much bloodshed and material loss, was undoubtedly a display of ill-directed patriotic feeling manifested as extreme animosity against foreigners. Till recently the Chinese despised rather than hated the foreigner. It is easy to make out the cause of the change. Five years ago China was reeling from a blow struck at her by an enemy whom she had held in extreme contempt. A fable popular in Occidental circles in the Far

East ascribes to the great mass of the Chinese people indifference to, and, indeed, ignorance of the result of the complications in which the empire has been involved. This fable has been refuted by recent occurrences. The defeat of their country by Japan was received with emotions of shame and anger by multitudes of Chinese. What is more, they saw that this defeat was largely due to the inefficiency of their Government. Whilst still prostrate after her encounter with Japan, China seemed a fair object of plunder to Western Powers. Mr. Charles Denby,\* formerly Secretary of the United States' legation in Peking, tells us that—as the result of the action of Germany, Russia, Great Britain, and France—‘China has not a single deep-water ‘harbour for herself except that of Amoy.’ All have been taken from her.

The immediate excuse made for their annexations—disguised as ‘leases’ of territory—by Germany and France was the murders of German and French missionaries. As outrages on missionaries of nearly every nationality are followed by demands, not only for the punishment of the guilty, but also for compensation in coin, in concessions, or in ‘leases’ which are indistinguishable from territorial cession—it is no wonder that the Chinese regard Christian missions as organisations for facilitating the exploitation and dismemberment of their country.† They are quite able to distinguish between German and French Roman Catholics on one side, and English and American Protestant missionaries on the other; and, though they may not associate the latter with schemes of partition, they have—or, from their particular point of view, the upper classes have—grounds for being suspicious of their activity. The missionaries consort almost exclusively with the lower classes‡ of the population. A recently published map, on which the stations of the China Inland and other Protestant missions are indicated, will astonish even those who know the Far East when they see how numerous and widespread these stations are. To the educated and wealthier classes

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\* The Forum, July 1900, p. 576.

† Signor Enrico Fossataro, who is not at all unfriendly to the Germans in Shantung, says: ‘Sono stati i missionari tedeschi di quella provincia chi hanno preparato l'occupazione di Kiaou-tschou.’ (*‘Nuova Antologia,’* July 16, 1900, p. 343.)

‡ Miss Gordon-Cumming, in her eulogium of a missionary—the Rev. W. H. Murray—says (p. 7), ‘Throughout China almost all Christian converts are illiterate persons.’



of Chinese every station seems the centre of a movement aiming at the infringement of their privileges and the destruction of some of their most cherished beliefs. We know what, in similar circumstances, would happen in even the enlightened countries of the West. The antagonism of the leading section of the nation would be aroused. It is simply a result of the ordinary laws of human nature; and, cruel and treacherous as he may be, the Chinaman, as we have already said, is a human being.

Neither the Mandarins nor the native trading classes relish the frequency with which concessions for railways, &c., have been granted. They know quite well that they have been extorted virtually by force, and they fear that more concessions will be extorted in the same way. The Chinese think that, at the present rate of giving, there will soon be no concessions for them to work themselves, and the reform party, not less than the most bigoted conservative, desires to keep in Chinese pockets as much as possible of the money that can be made in China. As Mr. Brodrick said, amidst cheers, in the House of Commons, the Chinese might well retort that "The Governments of Europe were 'competing against each other in their desire to make them 'loans on their present security, and that the speculators 'of all the countries of Europe were tumbling over each 'other in the scramble for concessions.'\* The deliberate support, or indeed vigorous pushing, by foreign Governments of the financial and commercial schemes of certain associations of their fellow-countrymen, eager to make money in Oriental countries of relatively low commercial development, is a novelty in international procedure which we owe to the initiative of Germany. It is incurably vicious, first, because directly one Government does so others are sure to intervene in the same way, and there arises great risk of misunderstanding and even of hostility between Powers which ought to work together in the face of the Orientals; and, secondly, because, as Professor Reinsch acutely remarks, 'such intervention leads large syndicates 'into political intrigues.'

That which humiliated and incensed large classes of the Chinese people more than anything else was the seizure of territory that followed the Japanese War. Mgr. Anzer, Roman Catholic Bishop of Shantung, recently stated in

Austria,\* that 'the whole "Boxer" movement arose a short time after the seizure of Kiao-chow, Port Arthur, Wei-Hai-Wei, &c.' In the Russian Press, which, notwithstanding the constraint generally put upon it, is sometimes allowed to remind Germany that her great neighbour has an eye upon her, the Chinese name of the Boxers was translated as 'The Great Fist;' and the 'Novoe Vremya' attributed the origin of this appellation to the 'mailed fist' of Germany, 'which was shaken in the face of China when 'Prince Henry started for Kiao-chow.' It is likely enough that the Boxer movement was at first intended to coerce the Imperial Chinese authorities into preventing the country from being further dishonoured. The Government probably began by sympathising with the movement. The intrigues and internal conflicts which spring up in every Oriental palace gave the movement a new form and a new direction. We really know very little of what goes on within the walls of the Prohibited City. 'Half the grotesque and absurd accounts of Palace life,' says Mrs. Scidmore, 'are manifestly untrue. Where there is so much mystery, imagination at once supplies material; and almost everything one hears in Peking about the most exalted Pekingese circle is immediately contradicted and disproved.' The Empress-Dowager may be a strong-minded, imperious tyrant without any scruples; and Prince Tuan may be a ruthless savage. On the other hand, they may be quite different. We can, however, be certain—if only because we find that such characters are attributed to them by gossip from the Palace—that the members of the present dynasty are split into factions. It is reasonable to infer that the faction which managed to control the Boxer movement would soon get the better of its rivals, and that consequently each would strive to control it. This is only another instance of the frequently observed historical fact that a weak dynasty, in the hope of avoiding destruction, is apt to throw itself into the arms of the most violent party.

Every Power concerned has disclaimed all intention of making territorial acquisitions in China. The proceedings of Russia in Manchuria and some apparently significant remarks in the well-disciplined Russian Press may make the sincerity of this disclaimer doubtful in her case; and a bad example has great attractions for some people. Nevertheless, the very fact that the desire to annex territory has

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\* In a communication to 'Das Vaterland,' a Vienna newspaper.

been generally repudiated goes far to prove that even a modified partition of China is almost everywhere considered inadvisable.\* What would best serve the interests of the majority of the powers would be a China preserving her territorial integrity, possessing a strong Government and a pure administrative system, with order maintained in every province, and as open to legitimate foreign trade as most countries now are.

The first can be secured by the simple process of refraining from annexation. The second will be made impossible if we destroy or unduly humiliate the present dynasty. If there were a better one to put in its place the case would be different; but where is the better one to be found? Consequently we ought, whilst exacting proper reparation for recent offences against civilised nations, to avoid carefully all vindictive action. Wanton destruction of institutions and even of material monuments would be unworthy of the mission which civilised Powers boast they are called upon to fulfil; and, besides, would enormously increase the difficulty of giving to the empire a stable government. No purity or efficiency can be looked for in the administrative body unless its members receive adequate remuneration. Consequently a reform of the fiscal system of China is imperative. We have a pattern by which to work ready to our hands in the Imperial Maritime Customs. If an organisation of the kind could take over the financial administration of the empire, an immense advance would have been made. The internal police of the country would rapidly improve, and the maintenance of order would be ensured; trade would extend, and prosperity hardly fail to increase. The difficulties in the way of establishing more numerous foreign commercial stations and carrying out great works like railway construction or canal construction would be diminished, or would disappear. It is permissible to hope that the missionaries of different sects have learned a lesson; or at any rate, that those who have not can be induced by their Governments to amend their methods so as to make them less mortifying to the more intellectual class of the Chinese population.

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\* 'It is certain that, should the policy of partition be realised, terrible conflicts between the Far East and the West must be the result. The broadest interests of civilisation, therefore, demand that the Western Powers should exert all their influence in maintaining intact and open to Western thought and life the greatest empire of the East.'—Reinsch, 'World Politics,' p. 241.

The proposals of the Russian Government, as modified by that of the United States\* to which it was communicated on August 28, still form the subject of negotiations between the different Powers. The proposals, to which was added a 'reiterated statement that Russia has no designs of territorial acquisition in China,' provide for early, though not necessarily immediate, evacuation of Peking by the allies; re-establishment of the native authorities, in other words the Court, in the capital; reference of the just demands of the Powers to the processes of peaceful negotiations as soon as the Chinese Government shall have been re-established, and shall give evidence of sufficient stability to permit of treaties being made with it. The United States Government had already avowed its belief that,

'All the Powers having disclaimed any purpose to acquire any part of China, and now that the adherence thereto has been renewed since relief reached Peking, it ought not to be difficult by concurrent action through negotiations to reach an amicable settlement with China, whereby the treaty-rights of all the Powers shall be secured for the future, the open door assured, the interests and property of foreign citizens conserved, and full reparation made for wrongs and injuries suffered by them'

The real difficulty begins when an attempt is made to reconcile the aims of different Powers and their presumed interests. We say 'presumed' because, though often believed to be in conflict, those of the majority are in truth identical. Rather more than a year ago† we dwelt upon the magnitude of the issues involved in the China question. What has occurred since in that country goes far to prove that we in no way exaggerated the gravity of those issues. Professor Reinsch has some remarks on the subject which deserve serious attention. He says:—

'Vast interests are there under contention—even the very composition of the world-civilisation of the future is at stake upon the issue. . . . The whole situation is fraught with fateful possibilities for mankind. . . . If a careful consideration of the Powers engaged in the Chinese struggle, their politics and tendencies, is of the greatest necessity, it is not less a study of most absorbing interest; for a drama is about to be enacted, the like of which the world has never seen. It dwarfs the conquests of Alexander; compared with this Titanic contest, the exploits of Napoleon seem a passing diversion;

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\* See the 'Times' of September 1, 1900.

† Edinburgh Review, July 1899, 'The Problem in China,' pp. 244-5.

and previous meetings between Orient and Occident seem the merest frontier skirmishes.\*

Here, again, no solution of the problem is possible unless facts are acknowledged. Several of the Powers are disinclined to territorial acquisition in China, simply because each cannot carry out the annexing process alone. In all probability the United States, Austria-Hungary, Japan, and now Italy, as well as Great Britain, are perfectly sincere in their disclaimer of a desire to annex territory. Russia's interests in China are, as the late Count Mouravieff frankly avowed, political, *i.e.* interests which can be best furthered by overt or veiled annexation. France's commercial interests in China are relatively insignificant, and in some parts, as shown by the decrease in the number of resident French citizens, tend to diminish. Annexation, in the opinion of many Frenchmen, would develop French commerce—of course, at the expense of another country's.† In the German Emperor's speeches may be detected signs of a belief that few things would prove more agreeable to him than the conversion of China or one of its provinces into a German copy of the British Indian Empire. The presumed advantages of annexation, in the case of these three Powers, would be quite neutralised if someone else were to annex also. There is no great inducement to acquire an estate of which some other purchaser has obtained choice parcels. He may give much trouble, and it would probably be difficult to expropriate him. Russia is the predominant Power in northern China: a fact which it is well to recognise. Nature and geography have done more to bring this about than any conscious action or inaction on the part of any Power. We shall find it wiser to make use of a fact than to ignore or try to disprove it.

The appointment of Count von Waldersee as generalissimo of the allied land forces was not settled in a moment of impulse. All the other Powers who had troops in China had to be consulted. The Emperor William's public statement that the appointment was due to the suggestion of the Tsar has been contradicted by the Russian Government. The excuse for putting a German officer in the position in question was that Germany had been more seriously offended by China than any other country, because her representative was

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\* World Politics, p. 85.

† See speech of M. Doumer, Governor-General of French Indo-China, quoted by Professor Reinsch, pp. 167-8.

murdered; but every other foreign representative had been attacked, and if he is alive it is no fault of his assailants. As a matter of fact no German troops took part in the rescue of the legations, because no Germans reached Peking in time. We may, therefore, take Count von Waldersee's appointment as a hint of what Germany would like to do rather than what she will be able to do, or will even try to do. That she will not go counter to any steadfastly held wish or intention of Russia may be regarded as certain. All the Powers having disclaimed any intention of dismembering China, or of seizing small patches of Chinese territory, we may credit them with sincerity, no matter what the real reason prompting the disclaimer may be. Equal confidence may be felt in the sincerity of their declarations that they must insist on compensation for the wrongs done them and security for permanent international good behaviour on the part of the Chinese for the future—these being precautions too obvious to be omitted. If the concert of the Powers can be maintained, it is not to be doubted that the objects specified can be secured.

It is possible to attach undue importance to the question of keeping military possession of Peking or of evacuating it and occupying some other place—for example, Tientsin. In spite of the stories which reach Western newspapers from the Far East, the Chinese have had a lesson which they are not likely to forget soon. They do not wish to see a third hostile re-occupation of their capital; and the Imperial family—for every reason that can have weight with an Oriental dynasty—must be keenly alive to the risks that it would run were it again compelled to undergo the humiliation of ignominious flight from a foreign army. It is true that, in the late operations, the Chinese exhibited a daring and a knowledge of modern warfare which were unexpected; but it is also true that these did not avail to save the Court from expulsion, nor the capital from occupation by foreigners. No one will dispute the moral, and, perhaps, the military, advantages of retaining possession of Peking; but it would be a very high price to pay for those advantages, if they are to be bought only by exhibiting to the Chinese disagreement amongst the interested Powers. It is, therefore, to be hoped that—whatever decision may be come to—it will be one to which these all may unanimously agree.

The Russian proposal for the evacuation of Peking, we are now informed, 'has been amended by force of circumstances.' The Tsar's Minister left on September 29, and,

though Russian troops are being withdrawn from the city, a respectable force remains. An important communication made to other Governments by that of Germany is, at the moment of writing, under consideration. All the Powers are agreed on certain points. They desire that the real authors of the recent hideous outrages on foreigners should be punished; that proper compensation should be given by China; and that arrangements should be made rendering it impossible for the late occurrences to be repeated. Germany considered 'that a preliminary condition of entering upon diplomatic dealings with the Chinese Government is the surrender of those persons regarding whom it has been ascertained that they were the original and real instigators of those crimes against the law of nations which were committed in Peking.' It is, therefore, proposed that the Cabinets concerned should invite their representatives in Peking to designate those leading Chinese personages regarding whose guilt there can be no reasonable doubt. The only reply to this communication as yet (October 1) made public is that of the United States. The gist of this reply is that the punishment of the real authors of the wrongs committed in China should be 'a condition to be embraced and provided for in the negotiations for a final settlement,' and that 'no punitive measures will be so effective' as those inflicted by the Imperial Chinese authority itself. Many reports of the attitude of the various Powers towards the German proposal have been published in the newspapers of Continental countries, but most of these reports are but little worthy of belief. It is likely, however, that several Governments incline more to the view of the United States than to that of Germany. This is corroborated by what looks like an inspired statement in a Berlin journal, that the German Government is ready to renounce the idea of making the surrender of the chief culprits in China a 'preliminary condition' of negotiations. The adoption of the German view might, and probably would, have been followed by a refusal on the part of the Chinese to give up the culprits in question, which must have led to a long and difficult campaign. In dealing with Orientals, no greater mistake can be made than demanding what you are not certain of being able to compel them to give. The Powers generally appear to understand this.

Towards the end of September Chinese Imperial edicts were issued directing the degradation and trial of Prince Tuan and other princes and high officials; and the Emperor

of China addressed to the German Emperor a letter expressing sorrow at the murder of the latter Sovereign's Minister, and containing a 'special earnest appeal' that early negotiations for peace might be allowed. If we may assume that these steps have been taken in sincerity, we may look upon them as indications of a desire to satisfy the reasonable demands of the foreign Powers. Count von Waldersee has arrived in Northern China; and the allied forces there number some 70,000. Of these, the German contingent amounts, or soon will amount, to 22,000. The ebullient enthusiasm aroused in Germany by Count von Waldersee's nomination as Generalissimo of the Allies and by the despatch of troops to the Far East has now cooled down. It has, in fact, given place to what is described as 'national discouragement and anxiety.' If the Chinese give satisfactory proof of an honest desire to arrive at a settlement, the moment is not unfavourable; and it ought to be within the capacity of Occidental diplomacy to formulate one promising to be durable. The withdrawal of the German forces without their having seen active service cannot but be unpleasant to those valiant troops; but, if the feeling in Germany strongly demands it, it will be carried out, though the garrison of Kiao-chow may receive a large and permanent addition.



ART. IX.—*Burnet's History of My own Time.* A new edition, based on that of M. J. Routh, D.D., by OSMUND AIRY, M.A. Part I. The Reign of Charles the Second. In two volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897, 1900.

WHEN, after the death of Queen Anne, the clouds of oblivion most happily began to settle down on the volcanic mountain of feuds and hatreds that for a hundred years of civil strife had been daily cast up with fire and dirt and turmoil of hell, it seemed as if nothing would ever again disturb the mists of ignorance under which the era of the Stuarts was shut off from the sympathy of succeeding generations. But now that in our own era these mists are rolling away before the searching breeze of inquiry, or are being sucked up by the sun of a warmer charity, although in the deepest gullies the clouds still roll and cluster, we are at last beginning to see the true form of that once fiery mountain that now stands cold and magnificent in the light of history.

Few men of that time gain more by this dispersal of prejudice and of ignorance than Bishop Gilbert Burnet, whose last care in this life was to offer up his reputation on the altar of posterity by leaving behind him for publication a 'history of his own time.' He had many adversaries, and he chose to write a book calculated to give them at once the deepest offence and the liveliest cause of exultation. In this book he recorded what he knew about the secret history of that discreditable series of great events which led from the Restoration of Charles II. to the final establishment of English liberty. This book was based on no proofs and attested by no documents; it was merely the record of what Burnet himself had learnt, sometimes at first hand, sometimes by rumour in high places. It was inevitable that such a book should be denounced by the indignant Tories as a pile of malicious inventions, and that his reputation for prejudice and inaccuracy should have become permanent and proverbial. Dean Swift read the book and wrote his terrible comments along the margin of his copy; in 1823 these notes were given to a delighted public in Dr. Routh's edition of Burnet.\* But now that,

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The best of Swift's notes are kept in Mr. Airy's edition. They are conspicuous for fierce brevity; e.g. in one place Burnet employs an unusual expression: 'Is this a Scotch word?' asks Swift. In

in the light of modern investigation, and by the help of newly published documents, it has at last become possible to estimate the real trustworthiness of this strange book, it is remarkable how just is its estimate of the character and purpose of statesmen, how accurate its general conclusions as to the tendency of events. In matters of detail its inaccuracy is the same as that of all memoirs written without correction from documents.

The fact is that Burnet's materials, though not documentary, were better than his contemporaries believed. They knew that his pride and imagination exaggerated his intimacy with the great, and they held it impossible that so indiscreet a man should ever have been admitted to the inner counsels of statesmen. Yet his other qualities, his honesty in a venal world, his charity and moderation in a time of violent counsels, had in truth won for him from his boyhood upwards the intimacy of men in power, Tory as well as Whig.

But he had not only more of the knowledge, but more of the impartiality requisite for an historian, than his enemies would admit. His views were more moderate and his mind less partial than was supposed by many whom he outraged by the impulsive frankness of his conversation or offended by the arrogance of his personal carriage. If he snorted in church when the prayer was read for King James while the more decorous rebels around him chimed in with a hypocritical Amen, he had been one of the few Whigs who, when James's co-religionists were being murdered, regarded the Popish Plot not as a heaven-sent party occasion, but as a foul outrage on humanity and justice. A latitudinarian from his youth up, the bosom friend of the gentle peace-maker Archbishop Leighton, Burnet, in spite of his lack of humility, on the whole carried more of the Christian code of ethics about his burly person than either his Dissenting friends or his High Church foes. The violent apostle of toleration, he was always against the Whigs when they transgressed, and never hot in his denunciation of the Tories when they observed, the limits of reason and humanity.

In no part of Burnet's work does his real knowledge of secret history, his essential fairness to all men, or the moderation of his political views, appear so clearly as in his

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another place Burnet says Leighton's 'style was rather too fine.' 'Burnet is not guilty of that,' says Swift.

account of Scotch affairs between 1660 and 1679. Mr. Airy, the recognised authority on the subject ever since his publication of the Lauderdale Papers, now crowns his work by this scholarly and probably final edition of the first two volumes of the 'History of my own Times,' which Swift not unfairly nicknamed a 'History of Scotland in my own Times.' From his intimate knowledge of Scotch affairs after the Restoration, Mr. Airy bears witness to Burnet's 'sheer honesty of purpose,' and so confirms the dictum of Ranke as to Burnet's 'subjective truthfulness.' It is, indeed, probable that the proportion of error in this Scotch part of the history is not so great as in the later English portion. Scotch affairs, smaller and less complex, the Edinburgh statesmen, fewer in number than those at London, were all familiar to Burnet as a young man; his own attitude, too, was in Scotch politics more nearly a middle position, equally opposed to both parties, than it was in England. No one will accuse Burnet of favouring the persecution of the Covenanters; yet he never had sympathy, but only pity and admiration, for the persecuted. It is worth while to quote the language which the zealots held of the latitudinarian episcopalian who officiously ran in to mediate. Mr. Gilbert Burnet, writes Kirkton,

'was thought fit to be a father in our Church and placed in Glasgow College, to breed our young divines, and what a fry his disciples were the Lord knows better than the godly people of Scotland, who refused to hear them or to own them. Their most common political profession was latitude and indifferency in opinions and questions, and this truly not because they thought so, but because here they were in best case to turn and serve the times.'

Again—

'Mr. Gilbert Burnet, a man more disdained in the west country [Ayrshire, Dumfries, &c.] than followed at London, for tho' he speaks the newest English diction, he speaks never the language of an exercised conscience.'\*

It would be difficult to put in fewer words than this last sentence the difference between the human, social, cultured Christianity of Burnet and the spiritual, personal, untamed religion of men who never forgot that hell was burning beneath the moors they trod, that this life was a floating vision, Claverhouse and his red dragoons a passing pageant, sin and salvation the only realities upon the doomed earth.

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\* Kirkton's 'History of the Church of Scotland,' ed. 1817, pp. 193, 293-4.

The Restoration régime, by the ineffaceable negative impression which it left upon the Scotch mind and character, holds so important a place in the history of the evolution of mankind that it is not uninteresting to trace its historical causes.

Up to the year 1638 the Church of Scotland had been thoroughly Calvinist in doctrine and ritual, and in form of government presbyterian in all but name; so James I. had been content to leave it. His more foolish son, who had not been brought up to know and fear theological Scotland, supported the proposals of Laud to bring doctrine and ritual north of the Tweed into line with the new Anglicanism which he had established precariously in the south of the island. The attempt resulted in the uprising of the Scotch nation. The unanimity of the movement can only be compared to the English Revolution of 1688; men who for the next fifty years never ceased to pursue each other to the death, on this first summons to the field rode together to repel foreign government and foreign religion, Montrose by the side of Argyle and Baillie the Covenanter. And not only all sections of religious opinion but all classes of society were united. The King's power in Church and State disappeared at one blow, and for more than twenty years Scotland was governed by a rapid succession of native factions. The Covenanters finally had the upper hand, and after the destruction of the Scotch Royalist party the ministers became, for the moment, the real rulers of the country. In politics, as leaders of the democracy, they displaced the barons under whose guardianship they had been glad to array themselves ten years before; a great part of the nobility had gone down with the Cavalier cause, and those who remained faithful to the Covenant were forced to accept the policy dictated by the Church. Similarly the social influence of the nobles and lairds in the various parishes of Scotland had been in the last few years seriously undermined by the spirit of religious democracy fostered by the ministers.\* In those days he who controlled the Kirk Session ruled the parish. Wealth, rank, and privilege were often no protection against the Calvinist inquisition into private life; the laird who walked in the fields on the Sabbath, the nobleman who lived after the questionable manner of his class, might find himself forced

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See Burnet, Airy's edition, i. p. 54.

to submit to judgement and penance at the hands of men who were his neighbours but not his peers.\* In this way the nobility were permanently alienated from the Kirk, as they had been temporarily alienated from episcopalianism by the pride and pretension of the bishops. The remnants of the Royalist party, and many moderate men besides, developed the intensest hatred of the clerical rule, and nursed the hope of revenge.

At length the alternate triumph of native factions was brought to an end by the appearance in Scotland of an army of English Anabaptists and Independents, equally offensive to Episcopalians and Presbyterians, but marching 'indefatigably on' under the great sectary himself. Marvell's discourteous prophecy was fulfilled:—

'The Pict no shelter now shall find  
Within his parti-coloured mind,  
But from his valour sad  
Shrink underneath the plaid.' †

As soon as the chase at Dunbar had shown that Scotland, if disunited, would fall a prize to Cromwell, that section of the Presbyterian party which held the person of Charles II., and used him for their purposes, proposed to combine with the broken remnants of the old Cavalier or 'Malignant' party, now hiding in Highland straths or Dutch sea-ports. But this proposal, instead of producing union, only created further discord. It occasioned that great split in the Presbyterian party which controlled events for the next forty years. When the more zealous part of the clergy and their lay adherents 'remonstrated' against this 'resolution' to join hands with the 'Malignants,' the Church divided into 'Resolutioners' and 'Remonstrants.' The Resolutioners were moderate Presbyterians and moderate Royalists; the Remonstrants contained the new and more zealous school of religion that, without being theoretically republican, felt loyalty to no king but Christ with His crown and covenant. Geographically the division was that of east against west. Under these circumstances it was not hard for Cromwell to reap the fruits of his victory and establish English government throughout the land. He

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\* It is of these palmy days that the story is told how a nobleman, having been forced to sit in the penance stool for three Sabbaths, insisted on thereafter occupying it as his family pew, 'as it was the best place in the kirk and he saw no better man to take it from him.'

† Marvell's 'Horatian Ode' on Cromwell.

brought down upon his head the curse of God by tolerating the sects, but he left the Church to itself, torn by a dissension which it was rather his interest to foment than to allay. The Kirk Assembly, with its political pretensions, suffered the fate of the English Parliament, but the Synods and Kirk Sessions were left undisturbed. Although the Remonstrants, being less royalist than the Resolutioners, were somewhat more favourably treated, the general attitude of the English proconsuls towards the two parties was that of the Roman officer towards the quarrels that divided the Jewish synagogues in the first century of our era. Cromwell himself never came to any real understanding with the unbending intellectual pride of the ministers, whom he vainly ‘besought,’ to use his own memorable expression, ‘in the bowels of Christ to think it possible ‘they might be mistaken.’\*’

Meanwhile the English soldiers were showing what an army of occupation should be. How different was the conduct of these hated sectaries from the violence of the Presbyterian soldiers after their victory over Montrose, or of the Episcopalian troopers in the days of Claverhouse !

‘There was an order and discipline, and a face of gravity and piety among them, that amazed all people. Most of them were Independents and Anabaptists ; they were all gifted men, and preached as they moved ; but they never disturbed the public assemblies in the churches but once. They came and reproached the preachers for laying things to their charge that were false. I was then present ; the debate grew very fierce ; at last they drew their swords, but there was no hurt done ; yet Cromwell displaced the governor for not punishing this.’†

Never before or since has there been such an army ; the ideal of the English soldier whom it was Cromwell’s fortune to lead was not absent-minded ignorance, but to know what was the duty of his life, and in what cause he was laying it down.

It was the imperial policy of Cromwell to unite England, Scotland, and Ireland in one republic, bound together by free commerce and by a simplified code of enlightened laws, everywhere vigorously enforced by the English army. In pursuance of this plan the feudal system was abolished in Scotland, and free trade with England granted. At the same time peace and order reigned throughout the land to a degree formerly unknown ; even the Highlanders were kept

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\* Carlyle, letter 136.

† Burnet, Airy’s edition, p. 103.

in awe as they never again were until the English armies once more penetrated into their country under the Duke of Cumberland.

Yet for all this the rule of Cromwell was unpopular. In spite of free trade, whose benefits had not time to be fully developed, the country remained miserably poor after the destruction of life and property during the civil wars. The presence of the English garrisons, however well behaved, the rule of English officials, however enlightened, was a cruel wound to the pride of a people that came to connect the old, bad, barbarous methods with national independence. Consequently, when the antique provincial system of trade, law, and society came back with Charles II., the Restoration was hailed with delirious joy by the whole Scotch people, as the English garrisons moved slowly off along the southern roads, as the caterans began again to stir along the Highland line, as the nobles returned to their dismantled castles and resumed their ancient sway, and Scotland was Scotland yet.

But men were soon to learn that the restoration of national independence was more apparent than real. The country was indeed to be governed by a Council sitting at Edinburgh, consisting of certain Scotch nobles; but only on the condition of their adopting the policy dictated to them at Whitehall. The nobles themselves were returned Cavalier exiles whom the course of events during the last twenty years had divided from other sections of Scotch society and totally alienated from Scotch religion.

During the early months of the Restoration the settlement of the Kirk was left over until it could follow as a corollary from the English Church settlement. When the tide of Cavalier feeling had risen to its full height in the south of the island, when it was evident that the English Presbyterian party was but a shred of what it had been, and that its strength had been overestimated at the time of Charles's return to England, the King and Clarendon naturally assumed that a similar High Church reaction had as silently taken place in Scotland, and they were assured by interested persons that this would at once become apparent if episcopacy was made the law of the land. The object of introducing this change once more was not on this occasion religious; on the contrary, the move was part of a secular reaction allied to certain political interests. Charles I. and Laud had complained, foolishly enough, that there was 'no religion' in Scotland, and had proceeded to make it;

Charles II. and Clarendon saw too much religion in Scotland, and proceeded to unmake it. It would not be fair upon Laud to compare him to the vile instrument whom Clarendon chose as fit to represent religion in a country where the influence of religion was, if possible, to be undermined. Laud had been a genuine enthusiast for a certain ideal; Sharp was an ambitious wretch, who obtained power by treachery and kept it by abject, tearful submission to his masters, varied by secret intrigues to free himself from their yoke. His treachery consisted in this: sent up to Court in 1660 as one of the representatives of the moderate Presbyterians to negotiate for the recognition of the Covenant, if possible, in both the kingdoms, he continued to deceive his employers by reports on the progress of their cause in his hands, while he planned the restoration of episcopacy with the Cavalier statesmen.\*

The Presbyterian Church had not in reality suffered that loss of esteem which English Puritanism had undergone. Its hold of the affections of the people was still firm as ever; but for the moment it sank without a struggle, from want of any adequate representation at London. The King listened, not to the true voice of Scotland, but to the broken nobility, out of touch with other classes and now bitterly hostile to the Church. The principal representative of the Presbyterian ministers betrayed his colleagues. The Remonstrant and Resolutioner parties had been so long at bitter feud and so long unaccustomed under Cromwell's rule to take effective political action in the Assemblies, that they could not at the critical moment unite to resist the return of episcopacy. Sharp was accordingly made Primate, and was sent back north with a motley crew of time-servers and epicures, ex-Presbyterians like himself, to govern the better sort of Scotch clergy.

But there was one among the new bishops who, though he had once been a Presbyterian minister, was no time-server and no epicure. If ever any man honestly said 'nolo episcopari' it was the saintly Leighton, when he reluctantly agreed to serve God in the see of Dumblane,

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His conduct and character have long been in dispute, but have been finally determined beyond all appeal by the letters published by Mr. Airy in the Camden Series ('Lauderdale Papers'). See 'Lauderdale Papers,' *passim*, especially the preface and Ap. C of vol. ii. See also 'Scottish Review,' July 1884, and 'Quarterly Review,' April 1884, for Mr. Airy's articles.



carefully chosen by him because it was the smallest of the Scotch bishoprics, with a revenue of 120 English pounds a year. The son of one of Laud's most famous victims, he had been born and bred a Presbyterian, but had conceived an aversion for the Scotch ministers as he saw them in the heyday of their prosperity, and had imbibed latitudinarian principles from some noble Jansenists whom he once met in Flanders. Ever since that time he had stood above the quarrels of the Churches, a mystic wrapped 'in 'perpetual meditation,' an ascetic continually punishing his body for sins of which he was incapable, seldom giving way to anger, and never to mirth, yet kind and loving to others as he was cruel to himself, humble and self-effacing in proportion to his merits and his accomplishments. Among the latter were numbered extraordinary learning, a personal influence on all who came across him, and a noble gift of preaching. Burnet declares that his utterance had 'a sublimity both of thought and expression in it that it gave a man an indignation against himself and all others. It was a very sensible humiliation to me, and for some time after I heard him I could not bear the thought of my own performances, and was out of countenance when I was forced to think of preaching.' \*

If the quality of Leighton's sermons had so remarkable though transient an effect upon Burnet, it is not surprising that their doctrines should have had more permanent influence; the long friendship between two men so different in temper resulted from the hearty adoption by the younger man of the latitudinarian and tolerant principles of the elder. These principles were not then in fashion, but Burnet lived to see them come in like a strong tide before the wind from Holland.

Such, then, was Leighton, who in December 1661 was consecrated bishop in Westminster Abbey, in company with Sharp, Hamilton, and Fairfoul, a jester and *bon vivant*, designated to preside from Glasgow over the religious life of the Ayrshire Whigs. After the consecration a banquet was held, at which all grew merry except Leighton, who sat thinking of the stern religious men waiting in northern farms and cottages for the arrival of their new pastors, and doubted if such 'feasting and jollity' 'became the new 'modelling of a Church.' At the new year the four bishops were sent off to Scotland 'all in one coach.'† To what a destiny were these men driving, blind instruments with

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Burnet, i. 241.

† Ibid. i. 251.

which fate should forge its wonders! By the time they reached Morpeth they could no longer endure each other's company. Leighton, hearing they intended to make a triumphant entry into the capital, went on alone, and 'came ' to Edinburgh a few days before them.'

If the rulers of the Church were avaricious and Epicurean, the rulers of the State were worse in both respects. The vices of the new régime at London were reflected at Edinburgh with filthy exaggeration. The Earl of Middleton, who for the present bore rule in Scotland as High Commissioner, eventually lost Charles II.'s confidence by the continual state of drunkenness in which he and his council transacted business, for even the merry monarch thought that several hours in the day should be devoted to sobriety.\* A few of the old Covenanter lords were still observed to follow the rules of behaviour that had held good when they entered politics, but many who had long professed a decent life broke out into the wildest excess, while the Cavaliers who had returned from hiding, and the young men come to seek their fortunes, soon 'perceived what spirit ruled; 'debauching was loyalty, gravity was rebellion.' These young harpies attached themselves to the political fortunes of Middleton with the ferocious greed of gain too common among Scotchmen when Scotland was the poorest country in Europe. 'There you might have seen men who, some ' weeks before, were companions to owls hiding themselves ' from messengers pursuing them for debt, vapouring in ' scarlet and ermines, upon good hopes to be all men of ' gold.'† The method by which Middleton and his party proposed to enrich themselves was by seizing the wealth of those who had adhered to the various rebel governments. The Scotch Act of Indemnity was purposely delayed, and the men whose lives and fortunes were thus left at the mercy of unscrupulous enemies compounded by great sums for their safety. After some time Charles and his advisers in London interfered to stop further spoliation, but enough had already been done to ruin many lairds and burgesses, to increase the distress and poverty of the country, to create a sense of insecurity unknown in England, and to initiate an abominable system of spoliation which was soon to be carried to greater lengths under colour of religious persecution.‡

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\* Burnet, i. 251.

† Kirkton, pp. 87-114.

‡ Lauderdale Papers, i. 92; Burnet, i. 216-29. Wodrow's 'Church of Scotland,' bk. i., chap. iii., for the list of statutory fines.

During the first few months of restored episcopacy in Scotland it seemed as if the people would generally submit. No attempt was made to alter violently the character of the services to which the people were attached, although parts of the Prayer Book were used in some parishes, according to the will of the minister; the *personnel* of the clergy was unchanged, and their teaching uncontrolled. In these respects the new settlement formed a happy contrast to the unfortunate 'prayer-book' policy attempted by Laud in 1638. On the other hand the theory of episcopacy was insisted upon with more ostentation than had ever been done in the reign of Charles I. Then

'the whole body of Presbyters' maintained 'such a share in the administration that the Bishops had never pretended to be any more than their settled presidents with a negative voice upon them;'

but now

'the whole government and jurisdiction of the Church in the several dioceses was declared to be lodged in the Bishops, which they were to exercise with the advice and assistance of such of their clergy as were of known loyalty and prudence.' \*

Yet even this state of things the Presbyterians, exhausted and broken by twenty years of civil war, appeared ready to endure in sullen silence, until the rulers, mistaking their silence for consent, required them publicly to renounce their old principles of Church government. All ministers who had received only Presbyterian ordination were suddenly ordered to go to their bishops to be instituted. This formal recognition of the episcopal authority, under which they had been ready to live if unmolested, was refused by all zealous Presbyterians. In the north, where episcopalianism was strong among both ministers and people, the order was generally obeyed; in the east it was obeyed by a certain proportion; in the west, where the Protester party was strongest, it was scarcely obeyed at all.

If the Government had been wise they would here have left the matter without resorting to force. Sharp, who was not devoid of shrewdness, and who had no desire to persecute any one until the moment when his authority was openly disputed, afterwards declared that it was without his knowledge and against his judgement that the next step was taken. It was certainly taken without consulting Lauderdale, Bellenden, Tweeddale, or the wiser

heads either at London or Edinburgh, although it ended by involving them all in its consequences. High Commissioner Middleton, taking with him the most frivolous members of the Council, had in the autumn of 1662 gone a tour in the west, which was distinguished day by day and night by night by the most disgusting orgies; arriving at Glasgow, they found Bishop Fairfoul, who complained to them over their cups that none of the western clergy had come to him for institution, but that the threat of deprivation would soon bring the Whig dogs to their senses. A Council was held on the spot, and Middleton and his colleagues, most of them at that moment in a state of drunkenness,\* issued a proclamation depriving of their kirks, manses, and stipends all ministers who had not received episcopal institution by that day one month. Out of nine hundred beneficed clergy in the whole of Scotland over three hundred quietly removed their families from the manses during the course of the winter. Although the removals were effected with due submission to authority and without interference of force they were in many cases scenes of the most uncontrolled emotion. The order in Council signed by these drunkards had torn up by the roots the feelings of a people who unite the demonstrativeness usual with southern Europeans to a depth and tenderness rare even among the northern races.

‘I believe there was never such a sad Sabbath in Scotland as when the poor persecuted ministers took leave of their people. It did not content the congregation to weep all of them, but they howled with a loud voice, weeping with the weeping of Jazer, as when a besieged city is sacked.’ †

In the case of the two thousand nonconformists ejected from English benefices at the same epoch half their parishioners rejoiced, and their places were filled not inadequately by the trained clergy of a rival church. But in many an upland Scotch parish there was but one religion among the people, and in all broad Scotland there was no school of episcopalian clergy to replace the three hundred ‘outed’ ministers. In effect religion had been disendowed and proscribed by law throughout whole districts, and a situation created which nothing but a revolution could

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Not only does Kirkton (p. 149) state this, probably from common rumour, but Burnet (i. 269) had it from Hamilton, who was one of the council.

† Kirkton, i. 150.

remedy. The pitiless scenes round the manses in the winter of 1688 might have been foretold by any thoughtful spectator who saw the parting of the people and their ministers in the winter of 1662. But the logic of history, though just in the rough to parties, is not just exactly to persons; the victims of 1688 were in many cases not the criminals; Fairfoul had long ceased to trouble the earth; Middleton and most of his colleagues had drunk themselves into their graves, and left behind a whole embittered generation of men to pay for their misdeeds. But in the spring of 1663 they were still enjoying life, and it was commonly believed throughout the west that they had drunk the devil's health by Ayr Cross at midnight.\*

Religious anarchy had by this mad act been produced in one-third of the parishes of Scotland, in an age and in a country when religion included social family and private life. The authors of the great folly were indeed almost immediately removed from power, but Lauderdale, the wise head who had disapproved their measures, and who now compassed their downfall, not having the character to undertake the weary task of undoing the mischief, or the unselfishness to endanger his tenure of power by inaugurating a liberal policy in an age of Toryism, allowed petty knaves like Rothes and Sharp to further confound confusion in the north while he made himself secure of Charles's confidence at Whitehall. In this latter task he was completely successful. He was clever enough to appreciate heartily the King's cleverness and to give him sincere flattery as his intellectual boon companion. He had begun life as a good and honourable young man, but suffering, as many others suffered, from the plague of viciousness that swept through the Cavalier camp during the years of proscription among men whose mental health had been undermined by bitter losses and disappointments, he was now so unprincipled in politics and sensual in habits that he gladly ministered to the King's private vices in order to retain power. But it was, after all, as a man of sense and knowledge in affairs that Charles most valued Lauderdale. In 1664 Middleton was perceived to be a fool and removed from the Commissionership. Henceforth Lauderdale was primarily responsible for the government of Scotland, but for some time he trusted Rothes as High Commissioner to carry on affairs there as his agent, and tolerated Sharp as Rothes' right-hand man.

Although neither of these two would have committed Middleton's original error in 'outing' the three hundred ministers, they were ill adapted to control the existing situation. Rothés, dull, brutal, and avaricious, thought only of making money for himself and dependents, and saw his opportunity in the religious discontent of the west; Sharp, petulant when openly defied and cruel when alarmed, had recourse to violent methods to re-establish his authority over the Dissenting congregations. The vacated benefices were filled in a hurry by candidates from the episcopalian north, many of them of necessity ignorant men ordained for the occasion—Highland ploughboys, as the Whigs declared. Even those who were learned and devout failed to please the Presbyterian laity; the intruders were derisively termed 'curates,' although in their method of conducting service and their doctrinal theology they resembled the men they had displaced rather than the English clergy. The people assembled to hear either their old pastors or violent young men who were ready to 'preach 'to the times.' These services took place at first in private houses, and later on, as persecution increased, on the moors which then came down close to the cultivated ground in nearly all the parishes of Scotland. Not only were these 'conventicles,' which had become the religion of a large section of the people, proclaimed by Government, but even non-appearance at the parish church, the crime of not sitting under the hated 'curate,' was made punishable by confiscations amounting in the case of a yeoman farmer to one-fourth of his substance, while a burghess forfeited his privilege of trading in addition to the fine. The Government hereby took into its hands the livelihood of all who did not actively conform, and sent Sir James Turner to the west with an adequate military force to gather in these windfalls, to break up all conventicles, to live at free quarters on the people, and by every outrage to 'dragoon' the Whigs into submission.

It may here be not uninteresting to consider what kind of men they were against whom their ignorant and despicable Government were, for the benefit of their own pockets or of their own *amour-propre*, about to begin internecine war; the politics of the period are, indeed, only important in so far as they stimulated the remarkable moral and intellectual phenomena that appeared among the people.\*

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\* The following remarks apply in the first instance to the west

One important difference between the lives of the Scotch and those of the English peasants was the continual pinch of poverty, the absence of ordinary comforts, and the perpetual danger of starvation. The author of 'Old Mortality,' whose knowledge and imagination never fail him in other respects, has not the heart to suppose that in the good old times the fowl was not somehow always in the pot, and has therefore overlooked one important aspect of the Scotch *dragonnades*—namely, that a district always on the brink of famine was driven to actual starvation by the civil fines and military plunder; although the driving off of a cow by a trooper may pass in his novel for a picturesque incident, it often led to very grim results in the Whig's cottage. The causes of their poverty were of a mediæval type. If an English Reeve of the school of Walter of Henley could have been summoned from his grave to superintend the proceedings of a seventeenth-century Scotch farmer he would have been familiar with the methods of agriculture, but would have been shocked at their clumsy execution; he would have laughed to see a dozen of lean oxen and horses and four gaunt men painfully scratching half an acre of stony land between sunrise and sunset, though he might have felt more at home at the annual moving of the cattle, when the neighbours came to raise the surviving animals on to their feet and support their fainting steps back to the pasture after the winter's fast. The green valley bottoms, where the wealth of Scotch farming now ripens, were then left as undrained swamps to the plovers and curlews, whose cries mocked the ploughmen as they toiled along the hill-side above. Except where a few ashes and dwarf oaks grow wild round the sounding linn in the gorge of the burn, no hedge or tree broke the 'huge naked waste,' even where the more fruitful plains of Ayrshire run between the hills and the sea; the farms were not, as they are to-day, slated castles of grey stone backed by breezy foliage, but thatched clay hovels standing up alone out of the wilderness; the kirks which passed from the ministers to the curates and back from the curates to the ministers were dark and dripping dens, often without any flooring over the bare earth, through which the bones of those who had seen

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(that is, to Lanark, Ayr, Kirkcudbright, Wigtown, and Dumfries), but it must be remembered that the 'Remonstrant' party in politics, and the corresponding type of religion, was by no means confined to the district where it was predominant.

the putting away of Popery came up among the feet of those who now suffered for the Covenant. The people themselves, whose struggle to support life on these melancholy terms coloured their whole thought, were in appearance dirty, foully clothed, and early-aged.\*

But if in outward appearance the west of Scotland then resembled the west of Ireland to-day the ideas of the people were very different.

In the first place, although poverty was increased by a foolish and oppressive system of feudal dues, that generation had not begun to question its essential rightness. Nor were the still unchallenged social relations strained by harshness or want of sympathy on the part of the landlords themselves; the feeling of the common people to the lairds was that of respectful friendliness cemented by a common religious enthusiasm, that made Rothes write to Lauderdale from Ayr, 'There is not a gentleman in this whole country 'to be trusted, and I dare swear not the hundredth person 'of the commonality, and in this condition is all bewest 'Glasgow.'† Many of the deprived ministers were younger brothers of the lairds; others came from the cottages of the poor; all were held in high esteem by both classes alike.

Not only were the relations of the upper and lower classes friendly, but there was little distinction between the middle and lower ranks. The farmers and labourers, not, as in England, two separate grades of society, met at daytime round the same board, and at night round the same hearth, a true democracy in religion, discussing the doctrines and the affairs of that Church of which they themselves had the ultimate control. It will be well to quote the remarks of Burnet on this western religion, which he had unusual opportunities of observing, and equal reason to approve and to condemn. The deprived ministers, he says,

'had brought the people to such a degree of knowledge that cottagers and servants could have prayed extempore. I have often overheard them at it; and though there was a large mixture of odd stuff, yet I was astonished to see how copious and ready they were in it. Their ministers generally brought them about them on the Sunday nights, where the sermons were talked over; and every one, women as well as men, were desired to speak their sense and experience;

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\* See Graham's 'Social Life in Scotland in the Eighteenth Century' for account of the 'Land and the People' as they were left at the close of the seventeenth century.

† Lauderdale Papers, i. 265.



and by these means they had a comprehension of matters of religion greater than I have seen among people of that sort anywhere. The preachers went all in one tract, of raising observations of points of doctrine out of their texts, and of proving these by reasons, and then of applying those, and showing the use that was to be made of such a point of doctrine, both for instruction and terror, for exhortation and comfort, for trial of themselves upon it, and for furnishing them with proper directions and helps; and this was so methodical that the people grew to follow a sermon quite through, every branch of it. To this some added the resolving of doubts concerning the state they were in, and their progress or decay in it, which they called cases of conscience.'

Two things distinguished the religion of the Covenanters from the kind of religion usual with persons in a corresponding state of poverty and barbarism. The first was intellectual acumen, which both Leighton and Burnet, even after their overtures of mediation had been scornfully rejected by these very people, contrasted favourably with the stupidity of English congregations;\* this subtlety of mind and the general delight taken in its exercise kindled a passion for education, since happily released from the trammels of the theology which brought it into being. The second characteristic was intensity of personal religion. By public opinion and by private exhortation every man was as much encouraged as he is now discouraged to have 'ane excercised 'conscience,' and to feel the unimportance of the visible world as compared to the invisible. Terrible as the consequence of those emotions often were, crude and odious as was the form under which they were most keenly felt, this view of life, handed down from father to son in the spirit rather than in the letter, to-day saves many of the descendants of the Covenanters from the vulgarisation to which the modern world is a prey. When, after a hundred years, barbarism and utter poverty began rapidly to disappear from Scotland, and with an increase of material wealth the stores of modern knowledge and thought were let in among a people ready trained to use them, there were born and bred in two neighbouring villages of the old Whig district Edward Irving and Thomas Carlyle, who represent with remarkable exactness the weakness and strength of the Covenanters translated into modern terms.

Thus intellectual eagerness and deep spirituality were 'in widest commonalty spread,' but against these inestimable advantages there were many things to be set. Some

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\* Burnet, i. 272, 524; ii. 428.

of the Covenanters represented little of the noble qualities and much of the odious and paltry elements of their religion. Their talk was often a half insane and wholly childish babble, a caricature of the popular style of argument which could be easily attempted by the least capable, since its learning was confined to the Bible and it depended for its merits and effect chiefly on a process of ratiocination, an art frequently attempted by those who have not the gift. Yet in this school of thought, so frequently delirious and nearly always a little absurd, the Scotch intellect was admirably trained.

But there were other evils worse than absurdity. The sadness which generally characterises all serious Scotch thought was here carried to excess, and coupled with an ultra-ascetic rigour which had small place in the society where there were no luxuries and few comforts. It is also clear that the Covenanting belief was the direct cause of crimes of blood, committed not in the wantonness of power or even of hatred, but as the result of deliberate speculation on the ethics of duty. These crimes arose from the intensity with which that belief materialised the power of evil, and from the increase given to the characteristic superstitions of the country by frequent and sudden changes in Church and State, and the bewildering alternations of complete triumph and cruel persecution. These natural superstitions were, indeed, shared by the Cavalier party and existed among the governors as well as among the governed. Middleton used to relate over his cups how when he lay in the Tower after the battle of Worcester his dead friend Babigni appeared to him in fulfilment of a promise made in life. Lauderdale was

'much mistaken if that man [Sharp] die a natural death; for he has a clench, and winks with one eye when he speaks; and I fear our good friend the Lord Argyle die not a natural death, for he has somewhat of the last, and keeps his little finger folded in his hand; these are ill signs.' \*

But this tone of mind, which with the careless and sceptical Cavaliers of the Restoration was merely an inherited instinct, was with the Whigs part of a connected scheme of religion; hell below, heaven above, and this earth the scene of continual emanations from both.† An atmosphere of

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\* Wodrow's 'Analecta,' i. 35-6; ii. 353.

† The gruesome lore of that witch-burning generation has been artistically enshrined in Wandering Willie's tale in 'Redgauntlet.'

prophecy and special judgement pervades the political history of the time as told by their writers. Sharp was a warlock, and in the days of his power stories of him that froze the blood were everywhere related and almost everywhere believed. Once when he was presiding at a witch trial the accused had suddenly cried out, 'Who was with you alone 'on Saturday at midnight?' The apostate trembled and afterwards confessed to Middleton's friendly ear that it was 'the muckle black deil.' When, deep in his bad designs against God's people, he wished in the council chamber of Edinburgh for papers he had left at St. Andrews, he could by some unknown and horrible means travel there and back faster than his messengers.\* Such ideas led logically to Sharp's murder and the half approval with which it was generally regarded, while the horrible scruples felt by one section of the Covenanters against granting any quarter in the hour of victory may be traced to the same mental habit of dividing mankind into servants of God and servants of the Devil.

Such were the virtues and vices of the people who in one corner of Great Britain openly defied the secular reaction against dogmatic theology, a reaction which, though it founded the Royal Society and opened the way for modern learning and thought, must always be odious for its alliance with the religious persecutors of the Puritans and for making gross libertinism and want of all principle the best road to power. The reason why the Scotch people, who were less under the influence of this secular reaction than the English, did not unite against their scandalous governors is chiefly to be found in the old quarrel between Resolutioners and Remonstrants. The Resolutioners had under Cromwell's rule developed traditions of loyalty to the House of Stuart and of hostility to the Whigs and western men, which kept them submissive after the Restoration and cooled their sympathy for the martyrs of Presbyterianism. This cleavage was very clearly defined in the year 1666, when the first definite act of rebellion took place. Several hundred of the western peasantry, deprived by the dragoons not only of the exercise of their religion but of the means of livelihood, spontaneously drew together without plan or leaders, and as a measure of despair marched across the hills to Edinburgh. They were followed over the moors by

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\* See Lauderdale Papers, i. 249-50.

the bulk of the royal forces, and when they turned back from the sea, after finding the east indifferent to their cause, were headed off and cut to pieces on a steep hill-side among the Pentlands, not six miles from Edinburgh.\* Some of the fugitives were knocked on the head by the country folk of Mid-Lothian, who thus showed that their hatred of Remonstrants was greater than their hostility to Episcopalians. Many more were captured by the royal troops or hunted down in their west country in the course of the next few weeks. The reign of blood now began. Sharp with calculating cruelty and Rothes with brutal jocularly hanged the unfortunate peasants by batches. The spirit in which Rothes worked is revealed in his letters to Lauderdale:—

‘This day in Council there is nine more of the rebels that we have ordained immediately to go to trial, so that the next week they go to pot.’ ‘If many of the prisoners had been soused it had been much better, and my trouble would have been much less.’

Finally he writes to Lauderdale that the people of the western shires will never be quiet ‘till they be totally ‘ruined.’ To achieve this object he entered into an understanding, behind Lauderdale’s back, with Sharp and several of the impecunious nobles who held commissions in newly raised regiments, to ruin the west country and to divide the spoils. Old General Dalziel, a Cavalier Alva, who had fulfilled his picturesque vow never to trim his beard after the execution of Charles I., had served in the Muscovy wars, and there learnt methods that he now applied to Scotland; he was sent into the condemned district as chief in command. ‘I was confident,’ he wrote, ‘that it is not possible to settle that country without the ‘inhabitants be removed or destroyed.’† The ‘settlement’ was proceeding on these lines when it received a temporary check from a fresh revolution in the internal politics of the Council.

The bitter cry of the ruined and bleeding west would never have reached Whitehall had it not been that Lauderdale’s own interests were endangered by this new combination of the military and clerical party under Rothes. The moderate men on the Council, Tweeddale, Bellenden, and Moray, who were attached to Lauderdale,

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\* See Lauderdale Papers, i. 249–50. The place was Rullion Green.

† See ‘Quarterly Review,’ April 1884, article on Lauderdale; Lauderdale Papers, i. 247–53, 263–5, and ii. lxxv; Burnet, i. 423.

now wrote up to London to warn him that Rothes and Sharp were playing him false, trying to cut the connexion with Whitehall and to monopolise the plunder and perquisites of the rebels for their own partisans.\* Again Lauderdale came down with a heavy hand; Rothes was deprived of his post, the army was reduced to a peace footing, and those military commissions withdrawn which were little more than licences to indigent Cavaliers to recoup themselves by the plunder of the Whigs. Sharp trimmed his sails to the new wind, and after an abject submission was finally admitted to forgiveness, when Moray reminded his chief that their principle was to 'make use of a knave 'as well as another.'†

In 1669 Lauderdale himself removed to Scotland to superintend the establishment of a new *régime* of moderation. Leighton, who ever since he left the episcopal coach at Morpeth had been modestly engaged in saving his own diocese of Dumblane from the general anarchy, much against his will accepted the see of Glasgow, and found himself the man of the hour. It was through his agency that Lauderdale still hoped by a belated and partial concession to mend the now incurable situation created by the 'outing' of the three hundred ministers. Although the Government was, of course, not prepared to turn out the curates—the only measure which would have restored peace—it was prepared to fill up the still numerous vacancies with Presbyterian clergy, on the sole condition of their taking an oath to obey the law. The offer caused a fresh split, this time in the Remonstrant party itself. Some of the ministers who had resigned their livings rather than actively acknowledge the bishops saw no harm in returning to them on these terms; they assembled round them small congregations of moderate men who enjoyed undisturbed religious peace during the remaining years of turmoil.‡

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\* See especially Lauderdale Papers, i. 258-9, also the earlier letters in vol. ii.

† Lauderdale Papers, ii. 28, 31, 84. The letters bear out Burnet's account of affairs in 1666-7, i. 423-84.

‡ Yet even these 'indulged' ministers were occasionally driven to curious shifts and subtleties to 'please both a jealous people and an usurping magistrate' on those occasions when ecclesiastical commissioners inquired whether they celebrated the 29th of May, and whether they made a practice of reading aloud two chapters of the Bible without comment. Why the latter was considered a test of loyalty by Churchmen, and of prelatie tendencies by Presbyterians, the curious may inquire. See Kirkton, pp. 291-2.

But the area of this toleration was not extensive. At best the vacant benefices procurable for the indulged Presbyterians were few, and widely scattered over Scotland; and, as it was, the majority of the 'outed' ministers and their congregations regarded the offer as a snare of the evil one, an insidious method of getting souls to acknowledge prelacy unawares. The text that was passed from mouth to mouth as a party catchword was, 'Touch not, taste not, handle not.' The indulged ministers were regarded with almost greater hatred than those who had kept their livings by receiving episcopal institution, and the advances of Leighton were repelled with contumely. This good man had already won the dislike of the 'curates' of his new diocese by advising them to rely on their own humility and charity, instead of on the soldiers, to obtain congregations. He now sent a committee of his latitudinarian friends on a travelling mission through the west, to persuade the people to accept the Indulgence. Their persons and talents were soon undergoing the unfriendly criticism of a shrewd people; two of them were at once set down as nonentities; a third was called 'Leighton's ape,' because 'he could imitate his shrug and grimace, but never more of him.\*' Burnet, who was a fourth, has left an interesting account of his own impressions.

'The people of the country came generally to hear us, though not in great crowds. We are indeed amazed to see a poor commonalty so capable to argue upon points of government, and on the bounds to be set to the power of princes in the matters of religion. Upon all these points they had texts of Scripture at hand, and were ready with their answers to anything that was said to them. This measure of knowledge was spread even amongst the meanest of them, their cottagers and their servants. They were indeed vain of their knowledge, much conceited of themselves, and were full of most entangled scrupulosity, so that they found [or] made difficulties in everything that could be laid before them.'

Leighton, ever a quick despairer, demanded to be relieved of a post where he saw he had failed; after repeated refusals he was at last in 1674 permitted to retire from a scene whose ever-increasing horrors might have been slightly mitigated by his gentle presence, but could only be removed by stronger wills and firmer hands.

The Indulgence had given peace to a few, but it had increased the woes of the many. Lauderdale's policy was to put a fixed limit to the operations of the dragoons, but

not to abolish them altogether, to conciliate Presbyterians with the Indulgence, but at the same time to pursue with redoubled energy those who obstinately preferred an illegal religion. The mood in which Lauderdale had begun his personal government in 1669 had undergone a complete reversal. The man who as long as he exerted only a secondary and controlling influence over Scotland had stood for peace and moderation, now that his personal rule was direct and absolute, rapidly lost every liberal sentiment, contracted that personal animosity against the Whigs which immediate contact with them seems always to have engendered in their rulers, threw over his wiser confederates, such as Moray and Tweeddale, in exchange for the counsels of the vicious woman who now became his wife. Under the influence of drink he lost year by year the last vestiges of a once noble character, as Middleton had done before. But he retained to the last qualities of mind that Middleton had never possessed, and was entrusted with schemes that no one would ever have unfolded to his predecessors. He was the King's vizier in Scotland, secretly commissioned to reduce that country to such obedience that it could be made a place of arms for the royal designs on the liberties of England.\* That it never became such is due to the intense dislike aroused by Lauderdale's tyrannies in all parties and among all classes. A constitutional opposition to his design, encouraged by the bold attitude of Shaftesbury's party towards the Court at London, sprang up under the ribs of death in the slavish Scotch Parliament, and found leaders in Tweeddale and other members of the nobility. Such was the general state of political unrest and disaffection all Scotland over, when the religious troubles finally drew to a head.

In the spring of 1678 Lauderdale reverted to Rothes's policy of wholesale military spoliation, which he had checkmated ten years back; he drew together in time of peace a great army of militia—the force that had been created for the King's use in England—brought down the Highlanders from the hills, and sent them together into the west to crush a rebellion that did not exist, or rather to create a rebellion that was required by the governors for their own purposes.† This invasion, known in history as the Highland Host, did not lead immediately to the desired result.

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\* See 'Quarterly Review' of April 1884, and 'Lauderdale Papers,' *passim*.

† Lauderdale Papers, iii. pp. v-vii, 89; Burnet, i. 145-6.

The country remained quiet until the barbarians had returned to the hills laden with the little they had found.

Nevertheless the outbreak was only postponed for a few months. Everything was hastening on the inevitable catastrophe. For the first time since the Restoration the turn of affairs in England favoured revolt. Scotland was drawn out of the petty round of her own miseries into the wide circle of history which, from its true centre at Versailles, enclosed within its fatal circumference the mountains which the Vaudois defended and the moors where the Whigs turned to bay, so that all the free peoples of Europe were engaged in one protracted struggle against arbitrary power, only to be decided by the English Revolution and ended on the field of Blenheim. Rumours of the Popish Plot reached, in monstrous shape after so long a journey, the remote villages of the west, together with vague reports that a party boasting of the despised name of Whig, and surely therefore led by godly men, was striving to seize power in England from the hands of prelates and Jesuits. Such were the additional incitements now added to the chronic state of indignation against the outrages of the dragoons. Their practice of tying lighted gun-matches round the fingers of men and even of women, and so leaving them to burn, suggests that some of the wickedest men in Scotland must have been in their ranks. Their memory has not yet died out in the hill country between Solway and Ayr, where unrecorded stories of torture and robbery, handed down by the merest local tradition, can still be gathered on the very scene of their alleged perpetration.\*

Archbishop Sharp, who had been opposed to the Indulgence and to all Lauderdale's earlier attempts at toleration, until cowed into unwilling acquiescence,† lent his hearty support to the congenial scheme of the Highland Host, towards which he and his brother bishops contributed a paper of useful suggestions to the Council. On May 3, 1679, he was travelling from Edinburgh to St. Andrews, not rapidly on his broomstick, but very slowly in his family coach, occasionally, we are told, remarking to the daughter who sat by his side on the hostility of some man whose house they were passing, and for the rest, it may be, reflecting with a smile how Lauderdale, with his airs of

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Neither these stories nor yet those in Wodrow are proved in all their details, but they represent a state of things once existent.

† Lauderdale Papers, ii. 189-91.



superior statecraft from London, had in the end conformed to the simple policy he had always advocated, or looking back, not unpleased, on the course of his whole life, how far he had got from his dim Presbyterian days, out of which reproachful faces of old friends came back for a moment to his memory. As the journey's end drew near and the open road wound across the Magus Moor in Fife, a strange face looked in at the window and a voice cried, 'Judas, be taken.' A dozen armed men were riding up. The coachman set off at full gallop, and for half a mile the pursuers raced along by the side of the coach, sending bullet after bullet through the window, but never hitting the Bishop or his daughter. Seeing that the warlock was proof against all save the edge of the sword, they caused the horses to be stopped, and with cries of, 'Judas, come forth,' pulled him out on to the roadside. The murderers were a party of Fifeshire lairds and peasants who had gone out to seek another of their persecutors. As soon as they heard that the Bishop's coach was coming up from Ceres, they had resolved that a solemn duty was imposed on them by God, who had surely brought about the meeting upon that lonely moor. For three-quarters of an hour the men, who were more fanatics than cutthroats, prayed, debated, preached, called on God to take witness and on the sinner to repent, hewed at him clumsily, and prayed again. All this while the coachman sat trembling on the box, and the daughter shrieked and struggled in the restraining grasp of the least cruel of the murderers. All this while, as was afterwards noticed by those who saw in the proceedings the hand of Providence, no traveller passed by, though it was on the highroad to the capital and within a few miles of St. Andrews. One of the party, opening the Bishop's tobacco box, released a live bee. The curiosity surprised none of them; it was clearly his devil. At last they made an end of their victim, and galloped towards the west, leaving the coach and horses standing quietly on the road and the group of kneeling figures round something on the heath. They drew rein at a house only three miles, distant, where they safely spent the night in prayer.

How far the safe arrival of the murderers in the west was itself a cause of the rebellion it is hard to say. But the news of the deed helped to precipitate events, by the fierce encouragement it afforded to those who approved it, and by the despair of others justly apprehensive that the vengeance of the Government would be general. Be that

as it may, little more than a month after Sharp's murder a conventicle on Drumclog Moss had defeated a regiment of dragoons, Glasgow had been occupied, and the whole west was up in arms.

This second rebellion was more formidable than the march to the Pentlands thirteen years before, since it came at a time when the whole country was so incensed against Lauderdale that it was impossible to subdue the revolted district without aid from England. Yet the ferocious character and uncompromising politics of the Covenanters rendered it impossible to turn the occasion into a national rising to secure a reasonable settlement. It would be needless to tell again the well-known story of the feuds in the camp of the rebels, their defeat at Bothwell Brig, the intercession of Monmouth in the brief day of his power to save the vanquished from the vengeance of the Scotch Tories, the arrival of James, Duke of York, when the tide began to turn in England, to let that vengeance loose and to govern the northern provinces on the lines of the general reaction.\* The state of Scotland after the rising was worse than before; it was only then that the Whig who refused to take the oath of abjuration was shot down without trial. These latter years were the 'killing times,' when oftenest the solitary graves were dug in haste on the moor, or in the copse by the burn-side, ere long to be joyfully adorned by rough tombstones, each with a plain tale of wrong and a strong assertion of faith.†

Here we shall leave Scotland, in this darkness before dawn, torn by ferocious factions, oppressed by cruel laws and bad governors, dependent on the will of English parties, and crushed all the while by the decay of trade and agriculture, and by constant economic distress. To such an

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\* Burnet, ii. 235-41, shows the connexion of English and Scotch affairs very well.

† An inscription typical of those on the martyrs' tombs is at the Kirk of Irongray:—

'As Lagg and bloodie Bruce command  
We were hung up by hellish hand;  
And thus their furious rage to stay  
We died near Kirk of Irongray.  
Here now in peace sweet rest we take,  
Once murdered for religion's sake.'

One of the most solitary is in a birch wood by Loch Trool; many in still more solitary spots have been lost.

end had come the bright hopes for a united nation, with her own good laws and her own Church protected by the strong arm of her sons, the dream which in 1638 had inspired the youth of all the native actors in this bloody drama, whatever had been their action since. Three main causes for the failure are to be traced—first, the pretensions of the Presbyterian Church, which alienated many who had armed to protect Scotland from Charles's Anglicanism, and which aroused animosities that were only sated by the ferocious persecution of the Restoration *régime*; secondly, the want of powerful and truly representative political institutions, such as the English Parliament then was, which would have given the Scotch middle class a hearing before the world and a weapon with which to make good its own cause against the political assertiveness of the Presbyterian clergy on the one hand and of the Cavalier nobles on the other; lastly, the wickedness of the few men into whose hands the Government of the country happened to fall after the Restoration, an utter want of principle so general among the Scotch governors of that period that it can scarcely be attributed to chance, but seems to have resulted from the general movement in Cavalier society against that old code of honour and morality which even Middleton and Lauderdale had observed in their youth. Owing to these causes the progress of Scotland was thrown back for a hundred years. But the resistance of 1638 had secured the ritual and doctrine of Scotch religion from absorption into the English model, and the resistance of the Covenanters after the Restoration strengthened the idealism of the people in that era so adverse to ideals. So were preserved in the darkness the foundations on which new Scotland was to be built in prosperous and happier days, still very far in the time to come.

ART. X.—*Debate in the House of Commons on Management of Hospitals in South Africa, June 29, 1900.*

ACCORDING to the theory which has, perhaps, found most favour among the learned of recent years, it was a deterioration in the health of the citizens of the Roman Empire which accounted for the ignominious collapse of the greatest civilised organisation that the world has ever seen. If such was the cause that determined the fate of that which all men thought to be invincible and eternal, health is not less the rock upon which is founded the success of an army in the field. For a time, indeed, and under special conditions, neglect of health may not spell ruin: the Americans in Cuba, and the French in Madagascar, fought and won because those campaigns were comparatively of short duration and conducted against a vastly inferior enemy. But it happens too often that, when an epidemic begins among the ranks, divisions dwindle into brigades, brigades into battalions, battalions into companies, and that the sick, by hampering the transport and consuming those so-called comforts which are in reality necessities, spread, as it were, a second contagion throughout the forces and paralyse the whole.

During the ten months which preceded the actual outbreak of hostilities in South Africa, the shadow of war seemed constantly to shift: now it receded beyond the horizon, and now it stood almost overhead. But throughout that period our people were, as the Greeks would have termed it, three removes from any anxiety, or even thought, as to the preparations to be made by the Royal Army Medical Corps for the possible event of war. Conscious themselves of not desiring it, they did not believe in its outbreak; even should it occur it was sure to be short and sharp, thus affording no scope for extensive sickness; and, thirdly, if both these two anticipations were to be negatived, they had no reason to place other than the most complete confidence in the War Office arrangements.

If such was the feeling of the general public, those who had studied the situation from a more intimate standpoint did not share those sentiments. To begin with, the corps during recent years had suffered a serious decline in numbers while our army had increased, for whereas its total of officers was a little over 850 at the commencement of this year, that figure showed a falling off in two years of not far

from one hundred officers. The cause, or at least a main cause, was the unpopularity of the service among those entering the medical profession, as is instanced by the fact that in the last examination held before the war only fourteen candidates presented themselves for twenty-eight appointments, the remaining vacancies having to be filled by nomination. To put the matter in another light, it is a fact that notwithstanding an increased army the medical establishment of officers immediately before the war was about 20 per cent. under what it was thirty or forty years ago. No further proofs are needed of what, indeed, is a matter of common knowledge among members of the profession, that the corps was not only undermanned, but was being stocked with men of inferior calibre.

Such facts as these gave rise to two remarkable expressions of opinion from authoritative sources previous to the outbreak of hostilities. The 'British Medical Journal,' having devoted itself to an examination of Lord Wolseley's statement that we had two army corps 'complete in every respect,' came to the conclusion that as far as the medical service was concerned the prospect of such a mobilisation was 'alarming,' and indicated a dread of an experience of the Crimean 'folly.' Professor Ogston, the Regius Professor in Surgery at Aberdeen, in delivering a lecture shortly before the war, referred to the deputation from the British Medical Association which waited on the Secretary of State in 1898, to inform him through its president that 'if there were to come a time of war, it is to be dreaded that all the horrors which occurred during the Crimea may be repeated,' in response to which Lord Lansdowne admitted that 'only the comparatively inferior men present themselves,' and that it was 'a very grave condition of things.' The Professor pointed out that 'the service is undergoing rapid deterioration,' that the Ministry had recently admitted that the medical contingent for two army corps was not available, and that it was a 'fatal error' to imagine that an organisation could be suddenly created by calling in civil aid.

To such administrative anxieties at home was added the knowledge that in South Africa any campaign would be productive of much sickness of the most serious kind. In Lord Wolseley's 'Soldier's Pocket-book,' as published in 1886, it is stated that the ratio among our troops of those constantly non-effective from sickness in South Africa was nearly 50 per 1,000. But, according to the last report of the Army Medical Department in 1898, that figure had risen

to 56½ per 1,000, the cause probably being that 'the prevalence of enteric fever in the command is assuming grave proportions.' Indeed, it was well known that enteric or, in other words, typhoid fever was a common scourge of South Africa, due to the neglect of ordinary sanitary precautions and the consequent absence of a pure water supply. 'Extraordinary precautions are urgently needed against enteric fever' were the warning words used by Surgeon-General Jameson, Director-General of the Army Medical Department.

If such was the condition of the department on the one side, and the dangers of disease upon the other, the events which immediately accompanied the actual outbreak of hostilities did not seem reassuring. On the mobilisation of the first Army Corps, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 general hospitals were ordered to accompany it, not to mention four stationary hospitals, twelve field hospitals, and eight bearer companies. It is the business of the Ordnance Department to supply such material as tents, beds, and wagons to the medical service. According to the statement of Sir Henry Brackenbury, Director-General of Ordnance,\* 'the reserve of hospital equipment previous to the outbreak of the war was totally inadequate: they had a reserve of only one base hospital of 520 beds, and two stationary hospitals of 110 beds each.' Colonel Steevens, Principal Ordnance Officer, added that on several occasions he asked to be allowed to proceed with the equipment of the necessary base hospitals, but was refused permission, and that, though it required about four months for the whole, he did not receive orders to proceed with the preparations until October 4. What was the explanation of this? Sir Ralph Knox, Permanent Under-Secretary for War, stated that the Government had not in July, or even in August, made up its mind as to what would have to be done.† Nor were matters much more satisfactory as regards the staff of the Army Medical Corps. Immediately after the outbreak of war the total strength of the officers of the corps was 833, or 60 below the figure which a late director-general had pronounced 'perilously low.' It was distributed as follows:—408 at foreign stations, 245 in South Africa, and 140 at home, besides other details to the number of 40. One single army corps had been mobilised at that date; a second army corps could

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\* Daily News, July 25, 1900.

† Daily Telegraph, July 25 1900.

hardly require less than 150 officers, and yet, as the 'British Medical Journal' stated, 'barely 100 medical officers are available to complete the mobilisation of a second army corps should that prove necessary; and not a man will be left at home to fill vacancies. Is this a safe and creditable position for a great and humane country?' Nor was this all. The embodiment of the Militia was proceeding apace. But, with the exception of a few companies of the Militia Medical Staff Corps trained for bearer duties, the Militia have no medical officers or establishments, but rely on the Royal Army Medical Corps. Against all this the Medical Corps, so far as itself was concerned, had one resource: 98 of its former members were on the retired pay list and liable to be summoned. But in the time of crisis this did not avail much, since of this number some proved unfit, others held permanent military appointments at home, and ultimately only four were sent out to South Africa.

So far, then, as our investigation has proceeded, several facts of the gravest import seem established beyond dispute. We have it on the highest authority that those who enter the Army Medical Corps are not otherwise than of 'comparatively inferior' capacity as a rule; that the corps is dangerously undermanned; that the mobilisation of a single army corps used up its spare officers; that its reserve practically does not exist for purposes of active service; that its reserve equipment was utterly inadequate; and that no steps were taken until October 4 to remedy that deficiency, although war actually began on October 11.

Then occurred a wonderful transformation scene—an almost miraculous change—a metamorphosis as satisfactory as any recorded. War was declared, and disorganisation, instead of exhibiting itself, disappeared from view. The curtain fell upon confusion only to rise immediately upon a department working like a machine. Its success was indeed so instantaneous and striking that even its heads and its representatives acknowledged it, for the relief of a public which had never been anxious. The most authoritative of such utterances were those of the Director-General of the Army Medical Service and of Sir William MacCormac. In a speech delivered by the former as early as November he explained that, prior to the outbreak of war, the surgical equipment had been so perfect that 'only a few extra nail-brushes' were now required,\* while as regards the dreaded

enteric he had taken the 'extraordinary precautions' of ordering Berkefeld filters—an order which we believe was not fully carried out—and of allowing anyone to be inoculated who liked. To these two precautions was added a third—the distribution among the Medical Corps of an American pamphlet on sanitation. Sir William MacCormac, who had been sent out at the Director-General's suggestion, in the capacity of a consultant, arrived at Cape Town in November, inspected No. 1 General Hospital, the only one then in working order, since No. 2 was not ready until the closing days of the month, and proceeded at once to Natal. On his way to Natal he wrote a public letter, declaring that the equipment for the sick and wounded was unprecedented and perfect, though with the exception of the base hospital mentioned the medical arrangements were either hundreds of miles up the railway with Lord Methuen's column, which he had not visited, or in Natal, the principal seat of operations, where he had not yet arrived.

The next authoritative utterances were those of Lord Roberts and General Buller in reply to certain articles which appeared in the 'Times' of January. Telegraphing towards the close of January, the former general expressed himself 'perfectly satisfied with all arrangements,' while the latter 'could only express my admiration' for them; and, accordingly, these preliminary criticisms disappeared. Proceeding in order of time, we may observe that the chorus of congratulation grew stronger as the months advanced. In March it was stated in the House of Commons that the Army Medical Corps was 'the real success of the war,' while an article in Blackwood, evidently written by a person of experience, eulogised in the same month 'the marvelously perfect organisation' and the impossibility of detecting the 'slightest flaw' in the operations of the Medical Service.

But of course the great climax came at the memorable banquet given at the end of April by the Reform Club to Sir William MacCormac and Mr. Treves, when Lord Rosebery presided and spoke with all his accustomed eloquence. He pointed out that, in regard to the war, 'there has been unanimity only on one point, and enthusiastic unanimity—that our medical and hospital service has been practically perfect.' Sir William MacCormac and Mr. Treves endorsed Lord Rosebery. They said they had been through the campaign and seen only perfection, though Lord Roberts pointed out subsequently that 'neither of these two gentle-



'men took part in any long and difficult march.' Last and most authoritative witness of all, the Director-General of the Army Medical Department stated in evidence at the close of July that he had not received in his official capacity any complaints of any special hospital.\*

Here, then, we are face to face with a somewhat startling administrative paradox. A medical service so unpopular as to be declining in numbers, in the standard of those who enter it, and organised only to supply some 50,000 men on active service, is called upon to meet the requirements of an army of far greater numbers. It is given only a week's notice for active preparations. It operates during many months in a country rife with typhoid. The campaign is so terrible that, excluding all those who pass through its hands and do not recover or who pass through its hands and return to the front, some 27,000 soldiers are invalided home. Yet at the end of this period the great official who presides over this department can state in evidence that not a single complaint of any single hospital has reached him. Who, then, tended the remaining 150,000 men, and had any complaints reached any other quarter?

The crisis, so far as regards the inadequacy, recognised on all hands, in the numbers of the officers of the Royal Medical Staff, was met in the three following ways. First, every available officer was sent to Africa and their places in the home establishment filled by civil practitioners, secured by advertisement, and also by a certain number of retired pay officers of the Army Medical Corps. Secondly, the numbers of the Army Medical Corps were hastily increased to such an extent that not far from one out of every three officers who have been sent to South Africa are under two years' service, men, that is to say, of the smallest experience. Thirdly, civil practitioners were enlisted and despatched to the seat of war, so that, according to the most recent statements, against 466 army medical officers there are about an equal number of civil practitioners sent out by the State, and even this figure does not include the civil practitioners engaged by the State in South Africa itself. That such steps were absolutely necessary is illustrated by the fact that even when No. 1 General Hospital set sail on October 6, 1899, 'the complement of officers is, of course, 'very short of the regulation number, which will be made 'up as far as possible as more officers become available.' †

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Times, July 26, 1900.

† *Lancet*, October 28, 1899, p. 1185.

Turning from the question of the supply of officers to that of the subordinate grades—namely, female nurses and male nurses, or in other words orderlies—here, too, a similar deficiency had to be met. Into the vexed question of the proper extent of the employment of female nurses during active operations it is not necessary here to enter. Although the traditions of the Army Medical Corps are opposed to female nursing, assigning nearly nine times as many male as female nurses to a general hospital, suffice it to say that at the present time almost all men, from Lord Wolseley and Lord Roberts downwards, recognise its desirability, more especially in the fever cases, which are the common scourge of young soldiers. According to Mr. Wyndham's latest statement there are 566 female nurses employed by the State in South Africa. According to Lord Wantage, writing at the same date, in the name of the Red Cross Society, of which he is Chairman, the Army Nursing Service Reserve, a private association presided over by H.R.H. Princess Christian, has supplied the War Office with '500 fully trained 'nursing sisters.' As regards orderlies, the State had nearly 5,700 at the date of the last official statement. How many of these have been provided by private agency it is impossible to state exactly. The Red Cross Society had provided 2,000 at that date, a large number of these having been recruited from the ranks of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, a private body working in conjunction with the Red Cross Society. As the above figure of 5,700 includes other volunteers, such as those raised in South Africa to the number of five or six hundred, we should be much surprised to find that the State had provided many more than 2,000 orderlies fully trained by itself.

So far, therefore, as our examination has proceeded, some glimmer of light appears in the mystery before us. A corps organised to meet the needs of 50,000 men has to meet the needs of 150,000, and does so, according to the official statement, without a complaint being officially raised. The staff, at any rate, has necessarily to be provided very largely from outside the Army Medical Corps. But that is not all, or rather is a small portion of the whole. Not only have civilians supplemented the staff of the Army Medical Corps to an immense extent, but they have provided whole hospitals and equipment of their own. The private hospitals that have been sent out from England alone are ten in number accommodating upwards of two thousand patients, the best known being the Portland, which was the pioneer of the move-

ment and opened in South Africa on January 7, and the Yeomanry, which was the largest. It should be clearly understood that these hospitals were civil institutions, as is illustrated by the fact that these two staffs were composed entirely of civilians, except the head officer, who in each case was a member of the Army Medical Corps, appointed for official purposes and having practically little to do with the treatment of the patients. And how many beds were there altogether available, say in June, for our soldiers in South Africa? Mr. Wyndham stated it at 18,600 in June, which figures 'include everything in the shape of local hospitals.' At that time the beds provided by the Army Medical Corps were as follows: 27½ field hospitals, accommodating 2,750 patients, though in reality field hospitals have no beds at all and only stretchers; five stationary hospitals accommodating 500 patients; and fourteen general hospitals, accommodating 7,560 patients. Total, 10,900 beds. The difference between 18,600 and 10,900 represents two things—first, the indebtedness of the State to private persons in respect of hospital accommodation; secondly, the concentration of fever and other patients to a number far beyond, and with a staff far less than, what is permitted or considered prudent by the Army Medical Regulations. Nor does this exhaust the matter. A vast amount of stores of all kinds have been provided by the various charitable societies, the chief of which is the Red Cross; not so-called 'comforts' merely, but such downright necessities as pillows, beds, and bandages, the necessary equipment of a hospital. A list of such provisions as supplied to the State hospitals by private enterprise might cause surprise in view of the official statement that 'only 'a few nail-brushes' were needed at the opening of the campaign, and that as the war proceeded 'stores have been piled up to an almost embarrassing degree.'

Hitherto we have been investigating a marvel and a mystery; a department, confessedly in deterioration, suddenly called upon to meet a crisis for which it was not organised, and facing it, as is alleged, without a flaw in its organisation or a complaint raised so as to meet official ears. One cause of this paradox has now been disentangled, the advent of civil aid to a degree quite unparalleled. But there are other causes. During the first four months of the war, until Lord Roberts's march on Kimberley and Bloemfontein in February, eight important battles were fought, four by Lord Methuen, one by General Gatacre, and three by General Buller. All these battles had three

common features—they were fought upon our own soil, their tactics were based upon the theory of the frontal attack, and they were all delivered either on, or close to, a railway. The advantages from a purely medical point of view of such tactics as those of the Modder, or Magersfontein, or Colenso, were great in the following sense. In each case trains were waiting to convey the wounded into the chief centres of civilisation, Cape Town and Pietermaritzburg, and thus no difficulties of transport or commissariat could easily arise, so that it was therefore perfectly open to all men to suppose that here was 'the one bright spot in the war.'

Another explanation of the mystery was that the sickness was for many months extraordinarily light. Until January, for instance, the health of Lord Methuen's force was extremely good, while at Colesberg General French's troops were healthier than at home. But the most authoritative and final statement made upon the point was that of Mr. Wyndham in the House of Commons on March 16. 'Do not let it go abroad,' he said, 'that there has been a great amount of sickness in South Africa. The percentage of sickness has been far lower than in any other case of which we have any record.' These words were uttered three days after Lord Roberts's army had entered Bloemfontein. Consequently, if the men up to that date had been healthy beyond parallel, then easy beyond parallel had been the task of the Army Medical Department. Thus we have said enough to show that until March a remarkable combination of favourable circumstances postponed any question as to the efficiency of our medical arrangements at the front. There was no test because there was no pressure; everything was 'perfect' because the hour of stress had not come.

And yet, such is the perversity of human criticism, even in those days here and there a voice was raised. Towards the closing days of December, we read in the 'Times: 'Complaints have been freely made for some time past about the military hospital accommodation at Cape Town; there is a want of organisation and foresight; the whole establishment was calculated on too small a scale; the number of nurses and orderlies is insufficient; it is absurd that the Army should depend on charity for sufficient food; there is a lack of a strong central organising head.' In the 'Guy's Hospital Gazette' appeared severe reflections on the management even of the hospital train after the battle of Belmont. The 'Times of Natal' also made certain criticisms on the Natal arrangements, which were, however,

at once stigmatised by the leading surgeon as 'unwarrantable, mischievous, cruel, and false.' But these were solitary and jarring notes, lost immediately in oblivion, or swiftly condemned by authorities beyond appeal. Like the sudden cry of some animal in the wilderness, they came and went without a trace, and were followed by a silence profounder than before.

It was on February 12 that Lord Roberts left his camp at the Modder River, and with some 45,000 men commenced the movement which ended on March 13, a month later, at Bloemfontein. During that month, in spite of the terrible heat and drought, the health of the troops was excellent. But now that for the first time we no longer rested upon a railway, an essential weakness of our medical organisation was revealed. It had no transport of its own, and, transport being short generally, its equipment both as regards ambulances and bearer companies was cut down to one-fifth of that usually allowed. What happened? At the battle of Driefontein, for instance, on March 10, there were about 400 wounded and only four of our ambulances to serve them. The result may be imagined when it is stated that our ambulance-wagon, an antiquated affair, holds only two men lying down and three or four sitting up. The consequence was that the removal of the wounded to hospital was not finally accomplished until the middle of the succeeding day. Fortunately, the general situation was alleviated by the arrival of a private hospital, the New South Wales ambulance, which, having its own transport, proved invaluable. 'Without this field hospital,' as Mr. Watson Cheyne, the leading surgeon with Lord Roberts's army, has observed, 'the Army Medical Department would very often have been in serious difficulties.'\* It is curious that at almost the same date the organisation of the Army Medical Staff in Natal was also undergoing its first serious trial. Here the staff, and not the transport, was being tested. On March 1 General Buller entered Ladysmith. Up to that time the health of the Natal field force had been excellent, but now, with the sick in Ladysmith and with the sickness caused by the hardships endured during the relief, heavy calls were made upon the medical staff. Yet so little provision had been made to meet such an obvious emergency that 'there is not a single field hospital in Natal which has its full complement of officers and men, most of them having lost

‘from twenty to forty per cent. of their establishment from sickness and other casualties, there being no reserve to fall back upon.’\*

A more serious strain was to come. Cronje surrendered on February 27, but during the days of his obstinate resistance, in the Paardeberg laager, the men encamped on the Modder below had drunk the water poisoned by the presence of that refuse and decay which is always so prominent a feature of a Boer camp. A month later, with the punctuality of a natural law, typhoid became rife among the troops who by that date had been some little time established at Bloemfontein. These cases, once having declared themselves, run for nearly a month, and accordingly any one who saw Bloemfontein on April 28 or thereabouts was witness of the results of the Paardeberg encampment exactly two months previously.

The Paardeberg laager was followed by another event of medical importance, the capture of the Bloemfontein water-works by the Boers on April 3, and again with equal punctuality, about a month later, in the early days of May, a further outbreak of typhoid began. At that time the troops were clearing from Bloemfontein for an advance on Kroonstad, and they accordingly entered that place on May 12 with the new fever constantly declaring itself among them.

The absolute perfection of our medical organisation in South Africa had become meanwhile so much an axiom among the people of this country, and had been so repeatedly enforced upon them by authority, that an article published by Mr. Burdett-Coutts on June 27, in the ‘Times,’ as one of a long series upon the general question of our wars and our wounded, was received with positive stupefaction by the British public. The pith of the statement was that on the date of April 28 before mentioned, hundreds of typhoid patients were lying in the Bloemfontein field hospitals ‘with no milk and hardly any medicine, without beds, stretchers, or mattresses, without pillows, without linen of any kind, without a single nurse among them, with only a few ordinary private soldiers to act as “orderlies.”’ It should be added that once the way had been opened by this critic the press, particularly the country press, opened its doors to numberless similar statements. The ‘Daily News’ correspondent stated of Natal that ‘on the face of

'it there appears to have been scandalous mismanagement,' while a medical correspondent of the 'Times' declared that 'if the condition of the sick at Bloemfontein was bad, words fail to describe the state of affairs here at Kroonstad, a 'shambles of sick soldiers lying immured and untreated.' Into the accuracy or otherwise of Mr. Burdett-Coutts's statement we are not concerned to enter, since Mr. Wyndham at once frankly admitted that 'to a lamentable extent it is true,' and since Mr. Watson Cheyne, the leading scientific authority with Lord Roberts at the time, has subsequently written as follows:—

'These field hospitals,' he wrote in the 'Times' of July 23 last, 'had arrived in Bloemfontein with a very much reduced equipment, and they very soon became overcrowded with sick to a most distressing extent, and not only was there extremely imperfect accommodation for the patients, but both the medical staff and the orderlies were undermanned and very much overworked. As the epidemic continued to spread this sad state of matters became daily more and more distressing, while there was but little increase in the facilities for dealing with it.'

We think that it will be more profitable to consider what ought to be done in future, and this leads us necessarily to consider what are the principles which should govern the organisation and direct the energies of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

It has been argued that every one anticipated that this was to be another of our comparatively small wars, and that therefore it could not be expected that our medical corps should have been prepared to meet it. But this plea in reality is beside the point. A body such as the one under discussion must clearly be organised on such a scale as to meet the needs of the largest body of men which this country can put into the field. It seems to be recognised that under our existing system about 200,000 is the number which we can maintain in the field for any length of time, and thus our medical arrangements must be framed to meet such an emergency. On this view an organisation, or at least a framework, should at all times exist equal to the demands of any such crisis. On the other hand, it is clearly impracticable and undesirable on the score of expense and other reasons to maintain a standing Army Medical Department fully up to the strain of a great war, since in peace time its members would be necessarily idle and superfluous. This problem has been solved in Germany as follows. In that empire every medical man who has served in the army

possesses a fixed military rank, even if engaged in civil practice, and is liable to be called upon to serve as a medical officer when and where required. Those who have not served in the regular army, but are in private practice, receive annually an inquiry addressed to them by the War Office as to whether they are prepared to assist their country in time of war. Every German medical man who has served in the army at all is maintained for nineteen years under military orders—that is, he possesses a fixed rank, and is allotted, even in time of peace, a known military post which he would occupy if war broke out. Thus the university professors hold high military positions, corresponding to their civil standing and attainments, rank as lieutenant-generals or generals, and in the event of war act as consulting surgeons to the medical officers of the army in the field or the base hospitals. On the other hand, the efficiency of the medical officers employed by the army in time of peace is carefully ensured. The most promising of them are sent to do duty for a year at a time in the medical and surgical departments of the great civil hospitals, while the senior medical officers serve in rotation in the larger military hospitals, in which are treated not merely soldiers but all kinds of ordinary patients. Compared with this elaborate and instructive system what have we to show? Will it be unpatriotic if we answer—little or nothing? As regards the Army Medical Department the system is as follows: The candidate, who must be between twenty-one and twenty-eight years of age, after passing an examination for entrance attends a course at Netley, and, passing out after another examination, receives a commission as lieutenant with pay of 200*l.* a year. From this point he rises to the ranks of captain, major, and lieutenant-colonel, an advancement practically determined by seniority and not merit, though there are two qualifying examinations. From these lieutenant-colonels a board selects twenty-four colonels, and from these again 10 surgeon-generals. Such, very briefly stated, is the hierarchy of the profession.

Two points of primary importance suggest themselves at once to the observer. In the first place, there is no system by which the members of the corps are kept abreast of the time and practised in the difficulties of their profession, as is ensured by the German system, nor, as in Germany, is there any system whereby civilians are at once drafted into the corps in case of war. As regards the first point, it is urged in answer that all the larger military hospitals



are being, or are now, provided with operation rooms on the most modern lines, and that in India and the colonies there are cantonment hospitals where much experience is gained; but this answer is of only a limited nature, and at all events has no application to that one-third of the army medical officers serving in Africa who, as already pointed out, had not more than two years' experience. Leave for study has been promised as often as it has been proposed, but has seldom been given on account of shrunken establishments. The army medical officer spends so much of his time abroad in isolation from modern scientific progress that an occasional leave for study is a real necessity, not merely in fairness to himself, but in justice to the valuable lives placed under his care. If, according to Lord Lansdowne, it is the men of minor capacity who enter, and if these men are promoted practically according to seniority, and if the State does not enforce their attendance from time to time at the best civil hospitals, with all their vast range of cases from which to learn, it becomes a matter of absolute certainty that the standard of the profession must be low.

As regards the measures taken to reinforce the corps in time of war the Medical Reserve can scarcely be said to be useful if, as already mentioned, it could provide only four officers to proceed to the seat of operations. The State had accordingly to look for civil practitioners. But, in the first place, it had no system of calling upon civilians; nor, of course, when those civilians had answered the advertisement, had they received any training in military medical affairs. For instance, at the outbreak of war, in order to fill up vacancies at home, civil practitioners were advertised for at a pay of 270*l.* a year, while as regards the front civil surgeons were secured at the rate of 365*l.* a year, with certain extra allowances and a gratuity of two months' pay on conclusion of service. Also a few eminent consulting surgeons were despatched at a salary of no less than 5,000*l.* a year. We cite these facts not as an account of all that was done, but as an example of the want of system, and, perhaps we may add, in respect of the last figure, of the expenditure that prevailed. But expenditure and want of system are old and inevitable allies. Suppose that in time of peace the War Office, as in Germany, were to keep a list of those civilians willing to serve in time of war, were to give a selected number a retaining fee, in return for which they were to undergo occasional instruction in the elements

of military medical organisation, then by an easy and immediate process an efficient reserve would have been created against a time of stress.

Passing from the training of the superior to that of the lower ranks, something must be said as to the instruction of orderlies and nurses. The army has hitherto neglected the question of female nursing, and, as already explained, did not place more than sixty or seventy of its own nurses at the seat of war up till a recent date at least. For instance, Mr. Clinton Dent, writing in March of No. 4 General Hospital in Natal, commonly known as the Mooi River Hospital, said that there were only nine nursing sisters at work. Nursing was, therefore, practically out of the question, since the beds numbered nearly six hundred. All that the sisters could provide was a general superintendence—valuable beyond question, but still of necessity so limited that its value was reduced to the smallest compass. Nurses were not only deficient, but in the early stages offers of trained nurses were actually declined. But as the war proceeded, as orderlies became scarce, as Lord Roberts insisted on female nursing, and as the usefulness of such assistance became apparent to all, more particularly at the base hospitals and in fever cases, the number of nurses was increased. Recourse was had to the Army Nursing Reserve already referred to, the selection for which rests with a sub-committee of the Red Cross Society. The qualification is three years' training in a civil hospital of a size adequate to ensure a varied training, good certificates, and a personal inspection of each candidate by a member or members of the committee. The regulations provide for nine nurses for a general hospital of 520 beds, but so inadequate was such a provision found in practice that in April, for instance, Nos. 1 and 3 General Hospitals at Capetown had 58, instead of the prescribed 18 nurses, between them. The regulations allow no female nurses closer to the front than base hospitals. Clearly the experience of the war is in favour of female nursing, to be utilised to a far greater extent than hitherto, having this further advantage, of releasing men for work at the immediate front. This, in its turn, will necessitate that organisation of a female nursing service, which has hitherto been neglected.

As regards the orderlies, it is not to be disputed that very often there has been a grave deficiency of such men, their places having to be taken for longer or shorter periods by untrained regimental orderlies or the actual convalescents

of the hospital itself. The situation has been saved to some extent by volunteer societies, and principally by the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. Here, again, the system has been somewhat haphazard, and the men of the brigade, though admirable and willing, have not had the advantage of a practical training. This might be placed at their disposal in peace time by the State, which in return would have the advantage of knowing the quality and capacities and numbers of fully trained men on whom it could lay its hand in time of war. Such men could also be directly enlisted in the great centres of labour, trained in the evenings in the various duties of hospital orderlies, taken out once a year for a fortnight's field training, and given a retaining fee to come when called for. In this way a fine reserve of male nurses could be created, ample for all emergencies.

Having now dealt with the weaknesses disclosed and remedies suggested by the present war in the organisation and training in peace-time of the medical officers, nurses, and orderlies, let us deal as clearly and as concisely as possible with the proper principles which should govern the disposition of this *personnel* and its equipment on the outbreak of hostilities, using this war to illustrate and enforce them. According to the published arrangements, the first army corps was assigned four general hospitals, four stationary hospitals, twelve field hospitals, and eight bearer companies, one to each of the eight brigades into which the army corps was divided. Each of the brigades has also a field hospital—that is, eight altogether—and the total of twelve above named is accounted for by the fact that each of the three infantry divisions has a field hospital attached to its divisional troops, while the corps troops of the army corps have another field hospital assigned to them also—that is, twelve field hospitals altogether. The theory is for the general hospitals to remain at the base, for the stationary hospitals to be on the lines of communication, and for the field hospitals and bearer companies to provide for the immediate requirements of the fighting force. The question at once presents itself as to how the *personnel* of civilians, which we have already dealt with as the necessary reserve of the Army Medical Corps to be called up in time of war, should be distributed throughout this system. There has been wanting in our present war any very definite method in this respect, and that for two reasons. The staff of a base hospital is constructed in the main with a

view to performing the complete work of a hospital in all its parts, and not to supplying a framework for the admission of civil aid when necessary. Consequently, as soon as pressure arises, where is the civilian to go? To the front—that is, to the field hospitals and bearer companies? But the closer the work is to the front the more does it demand a military training. Are, then, the civilians to remain at the base? But the base hospitals, though permitting, according to regulations, a certain number of civilians, are largely provided for already. The solution of the difficulty is that the existing staff of a base hospital may be analysed up into that which is administrative and that which is medical, the whole consisting of 166 men and 11 women—177 persons in all. The administrative section may, perhaps, be restricted to army men, but the medical section, numbering about 128 persons, could almost wholly be filled up by civilian doctors, orderlies, and nurses, organised under the control and supervision of the administrative section, which is presided over by a colonel, who is the principal medical officer, and a major, who is secretary and registrar. Now in time of war the vacancies occur, of course, mainly among the staff of the bearer companies and of the field hospitals, who are exposed to the risks of an active campaign. Hence, if the staffs of the base hospitals were left as a skeleton into which civilians could be poured in time of war, this would release a large number of trained military men for service at the front. And what applies to the base applies similarly to the stationary hospitals.

The second reason why no very clear system has been in working order during the campaign in the relations between the civilian and military members of the profession at the seat of war is the advent of a number of hospitals organised and manned almost wholly by civilians. Among the many services which these have rendered to the State there is one bearing directly on the matter before us, for they have shown what very little military training is required by those who manage a hospital in time of war. Take the case of the Imperial Yeomanry hospital established at Deelfontein about thirty miles south of De Aar. Though equal in point of the number of their beds to a general hospital, they began at once not with the regulation nine, but with forty nurses. Their staff of some 200 persons did not include more than one member of the regular Army Medical force. Yet this system, so admirable in its practical results, is open, as a system, to a criticism which is very cogent to the point at

issue. When did the first of these hospitals arrive at the seat of operations? This was the Portland Hospital, which may be said to have opened at Capetown there months after the war broke out. And the Portland was no larger than a section of a base hospital, containing, that is, some 104 beds, while the larger Yeomanry hospital did not get into working order until five months of the war had passed. This delay clearly might have rendered the movement very much less useful than it has actually proved, if it had not happened that the war was prolonged and that sickness did not become serious till March. Clearly it would have been better that some framework, some cadre, should have been provided by the Government, or should be provided in future, into which private enterprise should fall at once.

Leaving the base hospitals and moving, so to speak, to the front into the sphere of the stationary and field hospitals and bearer companies, it should be premised that when a man falls wounded in action it is the duty of members of the bearer company to convey him to the collecting and dressing stations, whence he is passed by the ambulance into the field hospital.

If the army is on the move, the field hospitals have to be evacuated as soon as possible and their inmates passed into a stationary hospital, which is established on the lines of communication. A stationary hospital differs from a field hospital mainly in this respect—that it is equipped to receive patients, not temporarily, but for the period wherein they may become fit to return to the fighting line on the one hand, or, on the other, wherein it becomes clear that they must be returned to the base on account of permanent or of prolonged incapacity. If the force, however, is not on the move, it becomes an administrative question as to whether the sick and wounded shall be passed down to the stationary hospitals, or whether the stationary hospitals shall be moved up to the front. For instance, on Lord Roberts's march to Bloemfontein the sick and wounded at the early stages of the march were moved back to Jacobsdal, to Kimberley, and to Enslin; but as the march proceeded the sick and wounded were no longer sent back. After the battle of Driefontein, on March 10, they were left at that place with a field hospital, and then, soon after the entry of the army on March 13 into Bloemfontein, they were sent for and conveyed into that town. Henceforth the business was not to return the sick and wounded to their medical equipment, but to send the medical equipment to the

Bloemfontein army. But where was the equipment? We had held the Modder since the battle of that name, fought in the closing days of November, and, during the course of an occupation of over three months, had piled up a great amount of stores. We had held Nauwpoort on the line, soon to be opened from the south, ever since the opening of hostilities, with the exception of a very few days of withdrawal. If wagons could go from Bloemfontein, three days' journey, and fetch the sick and wounded from Driefontein, could they not have fetched equipment from the Modder? But Boer raids were to be feared. Then could not the field hospitals have carried equipment across with them on the march with the troops? But they had no transport of their own. Why not, if the New South Wales hospital had its own transport on the same march from Enslin? If *personnel* and equipment had been ready south of the Orange River, could they not have marched by road, as we read was done by a portion of the Irish hospital presided over by Sir William Thomson? \* Or why not by train, as soon as the line was opened? Because it must be entirely used to feed the troops. Not so, since it was utilised not only to feed the troops, but to prepare stores for a future advance. If there were twelve trains a day, could not a few trucks have been set apart? Or was it rather that down south there was disorganisation? No. 8 General Hospital did appear—at least its tents did, but apparently not its equipment for a fortnight later, while No. 10 also arrived with its staff, but not its equipment. All these are questions which suggest themselves or have been suggested. Writing in May from Bloemfontein to the 'British Medical Journal,'† Sir William Thomson, surgeon-in-chief to the private Irish hospital, uses these remarkable words: 'The wagon equipment of the Irish hospital, fifteen ambulances, has been found of inestimable advantage to the local medical authorities. No other hospital here, except the Australian, is supplied with such means of transport. We have carried hundreds of sick and wounded for the various hospitals which have no efficient means of conveyance.' No efficient means of conveyance for the sick and wounded of an army corps of the richest and most generous nation that the world has ever seen!

Certain other very instructive or suggestive lessons are

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\* British Medical Journal, June 2, 1900, p. 1370.

† Ibid., p. 1371.

also to be learnt, as regards medical arrangements in the field, from the experiences and practice of the Colonial Division, organised by the authority of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener soon after their arrival at Capetown in January, and placed under the supreme control of Brigadier-General Brabant, with Colonel Hartley, V.C., as the principal medical officer. Early in the war the Imperial authorities, being short of the necessary staff, had taken over the volunteer bearer companies of the Cape Medical Staff Corps, and in December were calling for recruits to that body. Nor was this all. Owing to the pressure upon them, they had further absorbed into their organisation a majority of the rank and file of the medical staff, who are regulars, of that fine body, the Cape Mounted Riflemen. Consequently, when orders came to raise the Colonial Division in the Eastern Province, Colonel Hartley found that besides himself and one sergeant-major there was no medical staff whatsoever in existence. Our well-wishers, however, in that patriotic district clubbed together and subscribed for medicines, ambulances, and medical comforts. Advertisements were issued, and a mysterious and multifarious medley of some eighty persons assembled under the denomination of Brabant's Ambulance, while some fifteen medical officers were chartered, all of whom had practised in the colony and understood the nature of its ailments. On mature consideration, and after experience of the earlier months of the campaign, a departure from the practice of the imperial army was instituted which, as we have arrived upon the subject of bearer companies, it may be well to notice. It should be said that, in order to assist the regimental doctor and regimental stretcher-bearer in a day of battle, a bearer company consisting of three officers and fifty-eight men is attached to every brigade of a corps. It is the business of this company to supply first aid to the wounded, having collected them out of the zone of fire; then, having carried them to the dressing station either by hand or by ambulance, to place them in the ambulances for conveyance to the field hospitals. On a day of battle one sees men carried in, some dying and some already dead, lying on all sides among stained tunics and rifles thrown away. They pass rapidly through the hands of the surgeons and disappear. But as soon as the action is over this large and valuable body of bearers seems to have few or no duties assigned to it. Thus, while the staff of the field hospital may be overworked, the

members of the bearer company may be idle till the hour of the next engagement arrives. It accordingly occurred to the organisers of the medical department of the Colonial Division that the only rational way out of this difficulty is to make the bearer companies an integral part of the field hospital, in order that men of the bearer companies might be given other duties than those already described. A day or two after the relief of Kimberley by General French on February 15 the colonial troops had their first engagement at Dordrecht, to be followed by others at Labuschagne's Nek and on the line of the Orange River. In March heavy rains broke out, and fever, diarrhoea, and dysentery ran their course among the troops. But they coped with all their difficulties of sick and wounded in practical, if rough and ready, colonial fashion by utilising at every point every assistance that a school-house, a public building, or private aid could supply, making use also of the civil hospital at Queenstown as a base hospital. The next event of medical as well as military importance in their history was the siege of Wepener in April, and again they pulled themselves out of their difficulties by availing themselves of the churches, schools, dwellings, and medical stores of Mafeteng and Maseru. Colonel Hartley followed up these measures later by forming small colonial hospitals as occasion demanded at such places as Thabanchu, Rouxville, and Ficksburg. Are not some of these things written even for our own learning? Are they not illustrations of the primary principle that an active organisation of stationary hospitals, wherever and whenever it is humanly possible, is the great secret of medical policy in time of war?

Such, then, stated without fear or favour, is the truth. Such also are the lines on which we trust that her Majesty's Government will undertake to remodel the Royal Army Medical Department. The officers of that great service have had to endure the most arduous labours; they have had to battle with all the difficulties of an imperfect organisation. May it be for the last time!



- ART. XI.—1. *The Third Salisbury Administration, 1895–1900.* By H. WHATES. With maps, treaties, and other diplomatic papers. London: Vacher & Sons, 1900.
2. *Liberalism and the Empire.* Three Essays by FRANCIS W. HIRST, GILBERT MURRAY, and J. L. HAMMOND. London: E. Brimley Johnson, 1900.
3. *Address of the Marquis of Salisbury to the Electors of the United Kingdom.* Published in the Daily Papers, September 24, 1900.

SINCE household suffrage was accepted as the basis of the electoral system of the towns eight general elections have taken place, five of them since the extension of that franchise to the whole country; and we have now, therefore, sufficient evidence before us to indicate how far the hopes or the fears of those who took part in the great struggle of 1866 and 1867 have been justified by the event. The genuine terror with which men like Mr. Lowe and the Adullamites regarded the Americanising of the British Constitution, the establishment, as it seemed to them, of the rule of the ignorant and propertyless many over the wiser and better instructed and propertied few, seems to all of us now almost as exaggerated and fantastic as it seemed at the time to the Reformers a generation ago. Property in this country at the present day is at least as safe (we might easily put it higher) as in any other country of the world, or as in our own country at any previous time in its history. Even our country gentlemen, 'with their long line of ancestry behind them and their posterity before them,' in spite of the direst predictions, are with us still; and as for the 'Tory Party,' instead of having been extinguished, it claims to have ruled the country, with the exception of a very short interval, for the last fifteen years, and to have at its back at the present time, and in the new Parliament, as it had in the late Parliament, such majorities of the House of Commons as can be compared only with the sweeping Liberal majority which followed the Reform Bill of 1832.

Yet, in truth, our political institutions have been democratised or Americanised, if that expression be preferred. Indeed, it was necessary that they should be, if they were to continue to fit a social condition which circumstances were rendering more and more democratic. No man, who is not deceived by mere party names or party clap-trap, would think of measuring political progress in the last half-

century merely by the test of which party prevailed at the polls. When the Conservative party embraced the policy of what used to be called 'the Bright Clauses' in dealing with Irish land, when it made education free, and when it substituted in the government of counties a representative system for the old privileged administration of local affairs, it was conclusively established that no prejudiced attachment to the ways of the past would prevent Conservative statesmen from leading their countrymen in the paths of political progress according to the exigencies and requirements of their own day.

What, we wonder, would Mr. Lowe have said to the third item of the references at the head of the present article? How comes it that Lord Salisbury issues an address to the electors of the United Kingdom? Lord Salisbury is a Peer, and in Mr. Lowe's time, and long afterwards, were a Peer to have requested the electors of any particular constituency to record their votes for any special candidate, the Commons of the Realm would almost have been in arms at the aggression upon their dearest privileges. Even now we take it that, were, say, the Duke of Devonshire in Derbyshire, or Lord Salisbury himself in Herts, to issue an address to the electors of those counties warning them of the danger to their party of abstention from the poll, and urging them to record their votes for the Government candidates, so novel a step would be keenly resented by each constituency, and would produce little benefit locally to the Unionist cause.

It is, however, not chiefly as regards the relation of a Peer to the electorate that Lord Salisbury's action is of interest. It is as Prime Minister that he appeals to whole people in language directly addressed to them; an appeal which, with the exception of his own similar appeal in 1892, is, we believe, in form without precedent. When the Prime Minister has been a member of the House of Commons it has been usual to regard and to describe his address to his own constituency as a manifesto to the country at large. When a Peer is Prime Minister a similar object has been attained in a different way. Thus Lord Beaconsfield's famous letter of 1880 to the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was intended as an address to the country, and it was accepted by the public as a manifesto of policy from the head of the Government to the people as a whole. In constitutional theory the Government depends upon the support of Parliament, not on the direct vote of the electo-

rate; but the clear tendency in modern times has been in the direction of modifying the old theory, and towards regarding the House of Commons less as an arena of national debate, than as a mere piece of machinery by which the electorate puts in or out of office the Executive Government of its choice. Among ignorant people the belief is not uncommon (indeed at least one recent election address shows that it was held by a candidate for Parliamentary honours) that the Executive Government becomes extinct with the dissolution of Parliament. Thus, in their belief, a very close approximation indeed has been brought about with the American system.

Lord Salisbury, in 1892 and in 1900, recognised facts, and acted accordingly without any slavish adherence to old forms. Yet there is sometimes not a little virtue in old forms, and even in constitutional fictions. As yet no statesman has, in this matter, followed the example of Lord Salisbury. Yet his is clearly an example which might be followed by a leader of opposition as easily as by a Prime Minister; and we are not enamoured of a possible future spectacle of a general election where rival addresses are issued by party leaders 'to the electors of the United Kingdom.' Lord Rosebery, Sir William Harcourt, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman are, of course, equally entitled with the Prime Minister to ask for the support of the whole electorate, and to get it if they can. Still, a general election to choose the British Parliament is one thing; the choice of a President and Executive Government for a fixed term of years is another thing, and something is to be said for retaining old forms which keep these ideas distinct.

It is certain that, at the General Election which is just over, the one question which transcended and kept out of sight every other was the question of the choice of Executive. *Who* is to govern the country? was the question every elector put to himself. He did not ask what laws should the new Parliament pass; and hence very seldom have so few pledges been required from candidates. The war with the Dutch Republics, regarded in the light of a war to repel aggression, was exceedingly popular; and the chief concern of the electorate has been to see that its results should redound to the establishment of British supremacy in South Africa, and to the general strengthening of the military and naval position of the Empire. This policy has had for its chief representatives before the country the Prime Minister, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Goschen, and Sir M. Hicks-Beach,

men individually of the highest standing and of long-proved worth, closely united together, and heartily supported by a very large majority of the late House of Commons. To whom else *could* the electors look for guidance? It was perfectly clear to them that in South Africa, in China, and in foreign affairs generally there were difficulties, very probably dangers, ahead of us, which would make firm and careful steering essential to the safety of the State. However complete has been our military success in South Africa, the possible danger to the Empire due to insufficient readiness for war has been borne in upon the mind of every elector. This, we think, is likely to be the most enduring effect which the war has produced upon the popular mind. Had the South African war broken out at the time of the Fashoda trouble, or had Russia in November or December last despatched a force to Afghanistan, it is plain that the defence of the Empire would have been no easy task. So reasons the elector. This feeling of insecurity has gone very deep indeed, and it has, naturally enough, turned men more than ever away from statesmen whose chief and almost only claim to consideration has been the inheritance of the political mantle of Mr. Gladstone.

No one can pretend for a moment that there are not, on the so-called Liberal side in politics, individual statesmen in many respects well fitted to take part in the government of the country. The public has, indeed, never recovered the shock it received when they turned their backs upon their own past in order to follow Mr. Gladstone in the great *volte-face* of his old age, half a generation ago. If Lord Rosebery, Lord Kimberley, and Lord Spencer, Sir William Harcourt, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Asquith, and Sir Henry Fowler are still to be accounted Home Rulers, it must be admitted that they are able to keep under strict control their zeal for the establishment of a separate Irish Parliament in Dublin. The electorate—the British Liberal electorate, we mean—is sick of the very words ‘Home Rule.’ If Home Rule is not dead, it is not their fault. But, unfortunately for ‘Liberals,’ the mere wishing Home Rule dead does not kill it, or kill the disastrous consequences that have followed from their ill-starred alliance with a section of Irish politicians whom the country now thoroughly understands.

Can there be a Liberal Government when there is no longer a Liberal ‘Party’? ‘Party,’ according to Burke’s well-known definition, ‘is a body of men united for promoting by their

'joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed.' Where do we see 'a united body of men'? Where are their 'joint endeavours'? Where is 'the principle in which they are all agreed'? For years past there has been little evidence of the existence of these essentials to any political party in the conduct of the Opposition in the country, or in the House of Commons, or even on their own Front Bench. It is the fashion when a party is disorganised and discredited to lay all the blame upon faulty leadership, and thus Lord Rosebery, Sir William Harcourt, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman have successively been held accountable for the disastrous condition to which the Opposition have been reduced. In truth, the leadership has been unsuccessful from no want of capacity on the part of the leaders, but from the absence, among those it is proposed to lead, of any fundamental agreement of political opinion. The fact of the matter is that the Liberal Party, if so it is to be called, has gone to pieces, and no mere selection of 'a leader' will suffice to reunite it. There can be no doubt that some day again, possibly much sooner than is generally expected, a formidable opposition will grow up; but it will be born out of conditions and be the result of circumstances not yet in view. Who, at the commencement of any one of the last seven Parliaments, could have anticipated the events which attended its close? One thing, however, seems certain—viz., that a successful party cannot be formed out of the heterogeneous elements, English and Irish, which for some years it has been the vain effort of a succession of statesmen to weld together. The shipwreck of Home Rule was too complete to render possible the reorganisation of the old crew; but that is no reason why, as time goes on, Parliament and the country should not again see that for which they would both be the better, a strong, united, and responsible Opposition.

The plain issue before the country was amply sufficient to justify the overwhelming support given by the electorate to Lord Salisbury's Government, and the result was perhaps almost as much due to the demerits and want of character of the Opposition as to the high deserts of the Administration. To the ordinary elector, there really appeared to be no choice; and it is more than doubtful whether Liberal candidates could have polled even the numbers they did had electors supposed the effect would have been to eject Lord Salisbury from power. Party names have a strong hold over voters, and in all probability many a man, especially towards

the end of the elections, voted Liberal in the comfortable feeling that his party allegiance would do no harm.

In every general election there is of necessity much exaggerated nonsense, on the one side and the other, poured into the ears of the electors. Electioneering, as professionally conducted, is not a high-class business, and where without any exaggeration the issues to be determined were so plain it is to be regretted that attempts should have been made to create personal antipathy and prejudice against political opponents, and to treat a difference of political opinion as if it involved a want of patriotism. Mr. Chamberlain has had the compliment paid him of being the most attacked statesman in the Government. Unfortunately many of the attacks took the singularly offensive form of imputing, without the slightest foundation, interested motives of a private character in the business of administration. Indeed, if these charges meant anything at all, they conveyed a suggestion of positive corruption. With some few electors this sort of thing might tell, but by the great mass of them it must assuredly have been felt that this was a 'striking 'below the belt' unworthy of English politics, and the slander must have recoiled on those for whose benefit it was employed. On the other hand, the preposterous absurdity of charging Englishmen who condemned the South African war, or who disbelieved in the policy of annexation of the Republics, with disloyalty to their own country, though it might tickle the ears of party groundlings and draw thoughtless cheers from party mobs, brought no real strength to the Unionist cause, and served only to exasperate political opponents. The Liberal party has plenty of failings, but no reasonable man seriously associates Liberal candidates or Liberal electors in general with the views of Dr. Clark.

There can, we think, be little doubt as to the meaning of the General Election. Lord Salisbury's Government is to carry out the arrangements in South Africa consequent upon the war, it is to continue to conduct our foreign affairs so as to safeguard Imperial interests all over the world, and it is to strengthen the military and naval defences of the United Kingdom so as to render those interests as secure as possible against attack. This is the whole mandate of the country to the new Parliament, a 'mandate,' general in its character, leaving entire freedom to the Government to adopt its own measures, and at the same time a 'mandate' limited to what may be termed the non-domestic fields of political action. As to home affairs the country appears to

be satisfied with the steady progress made during the last five years, of which an excellent account will be found in the very useful history of 'Lord Salisbury's Third Administration' cited at the head of this article. The country in 1892 did not ask for, and was not promised, any showy legislation such as would strike the imaginations of men, and accordingly it is not disappointed at a record of useful and practical, though for the most part unsensational, legislation. One measure of exceptional importance deserves to be mentioned—the Workmen's Compensation Act. An entirely new principle has been introduced throwing upon the employer the burden of compensating employes for injuries received from any cause in the course of their employment. The fears felt by very many employers at the passing of the Act have been greatly allayed by a few years' experience of its operation, and many of them frankly confess that their alarm was founded on misapprehension. Parliament has already greatly extended the scope of the Act, and the Government, and in an especial degree Mr. Chamberlain, are entitled to receive the greatest credit for what promises to be a most beneficial reform of the law.

How far the new Parliament is specially well fitted to carry out the desires of the country remains to be seen. The majority at all events is ample, but quality as well as quantity counts for something even in parliamentary politics; and it was never more necessary than at present that the character of the House of Commons, its independence and high tone in debate, should be preserved. Some time must elapse before any judgement can be formed as to the value of the new elements added by the General Election. The disappearance of several members of mark is much to be deplored in the interest of the House of Commons itself, irrespective of party considerations. For thirty years Mr. Goschen has been one of the most respected and trusted of our statesmen, doing equal service to the State whether in or out of office, and affording an example to younger men of the influence which may be won by courage, and an independence which no one was ever so foolish as to suppose sprang from anything but the most patriotic motives. Mr. Goschen has not, perhaps, always played his own game well; but then it was never his own game that he was playing, and certainly, when the full history of the troubled politics of the last thirty years comes to be written, few names will stand higher in the estimation of his countrymen than that of Mr. Goschen.

Mr. Courtney has also, we have no hesitation in saying, served his country well, and assuredly the country has given him very little thanks for his pains. Yet the House of Commons without Mr. Courtney will be much the poorer. He was necessarily and by nature always in a minority and the strenuous advocate of the rights and of the cause of minorities. In a democratic age King Majority is absolute monarch. He is surrounded with courtiers, and flattery is the easiest road to favour. Nevertheless, as with the older-fashioned absolute monarchies that the world has known, it is not an altogether happy condition of affairs when men are silenced for giving advice which is unpalatable to the powers that be. However little they may have agreed with Mr. Courtney's views, members of both parties will miss in him a most able, thoughtful, and conscientious man, whose frequent interventions in debate never failed to raise its tone and deeply to interest the whole House. The Conservatives and Liberals have each lost an able speaker who will be greatly missed in the House of Commons, and not only by their own political friends; but Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Birrell are certain to find their way back to Westminster very shortly if they wish to return there; and, on the whole, the new Parliament does not show many gaps among those to whom its predecessor lent a delighted ear.

Rarely has Prime Minister received such a testimony of public confidence as has been awarded to Lord Salisbury in the years 1895 and 1900. He makes again a fresh start with a great majority in both Houses of Parliament, and a free hand. He need not surely bring any reproaches now against the British Constitution! The difficulties which he has to encounter lie in the problems themselves, not in any defects inherent in our system of government. The people have done their part, and it is now the duty of the Prime Minister and his colleagues to do theirs and to justify the confidence reposed in them.

With the end of the war South African politics have entered upon a new stage. Nothing is to be gained by the reiteration of mutual complaints by Dutch and English as to the real cause of the war. Statesmen have to accept facts. The Republics have been conquered and annexed, and a situation exists which many wise and patriotic Englishmen were deeply anxious to avert. The end to be attained—the establishment of just and equal and free government for the whole of South Africa under the British flag—can only come with time, and as a result of



the reconciliation of two races now of necessity bitterly hostile. Mr. Rhodes is reported to have reminded the South African League at Capetown on October 10 that it was against Krugerism, not against the Dutch, that they had fought. Would that this lesson could have been enforced upon them earlier! How different were the two things all who have read the admirable letters of Sir Henry de Villiers must recognise. He and many another British subject of purely Dutch blood in Cape Colony, with entire loyalty, did their very best to resist Krugerism, and so to avert the war which they more than any others in South Africa looked forward to with horror. Since the war it will be for a time more difficult than ever for Englishmen and Dutchmen to make the best of each other; but however difficult, that is what they have to do, and what a prudent statesmanship may greatly help them in doing. Whatever temporary arrangements are found necessary in the annexed States, Cape Colony has the same system of free constitutional government as the other great colonies of the Empire; and no parliamentary system can be expected to work smoothly or satisfactorily while the electorate is torn asunder by the bitterest sentiments of racial animosity. So far the Government of the Cape, supported by Mr. Schreiner and the majority of the Parliament, has not shown any vindictiveness or desire to go beyond what is necessary for the restoration of law and order in the districts where war (practically civil war) prevailed. In some respects for a time more difficulty may be found in Cape Colony than in the annexed States; but so far the action of the Cape Ministry and Parliament promises well, and is such as to encourage the well-wishers of South African constitutionalism. Taking South Africa as a whole, it is clear that the ultimate restoration of a feeling of common citizenship between Dutch and English will depend far less upon any cut and dried so-called 'settlement' of the conquered territories than upon the firmness, patience, sympathy, and tact shown by those who represent the conquerors. We have to substitute a sense of fellow-citizenship among South Africans for the unhappy relation of conqueror and conquered, inevitably the immediate, but, we hope, only the transitory, result of the war. The task before us is no easy one. We began, to our cost, by greatly underrating the difficulties of conquering the Transvaal; do not let us now make a similar mistake as to completing the pacification of South Africa.

How will the Government and Parliament carry out that part of the national 'mandate' which relates to strengthening the military and naval power of the Empire? Here, also, the Government has a perfectly free hand, no sort of pressure in favour of any special measures having been attempted. The dissatisfaction with the War Department is natural, and out of it much useful reform may come; but it is well to recognise that the public has expected from the Department, in the South African war, very much more than it was provided with means to perform. Previous Governments and Parliaments considered, rightly or wrongly, that a very large army was not required for the defence of the Empire, and that we were doing all that was necessary in making ready to send and maintain abroad an army of 50,000 or 60,000 men. That it has been possible to provide at all, at short notice, an army of 200,000 men, and keep them fully supplied, at a distance of many thousand miles across the seas and many hundred miles inland, and that there has been nothing in the nature of a breakdown, reflects great credit not only upon the spirit of the British race all over the world, but upon Lord Lansdowne and those who have assisted him in the arduous work of administration. What the British public now requires is to make provision on a very much larger scale than heretofore against the danger of foreign war. In truth, it is not so much that the War Department has been to blame as that our need for a larger army has now been realised, the inadequacy of our old arrangements having been forced upon the public mind by recent events.

How the very reasonable demand of the country for greater security is to be satisfied, it is for the Government in the first instance to consider. There is no desire to rival the great military empires in the number of the forces which we can put in the field. To the popular mind the problem to be faced does not appear an insoluble one. The United Kingdom and the Empire have to be made practically secure against attack. In our favour is our insular position. We have a very powerful, and we may have, if we choose to pay for it, an overwhelmingly powerful fleet. As regards our military strength, we have a willingness to serve amongst all ranks of the community, as the last eight months have conspicuously demonstrated. There is, after all, a foundation of truth in the foolish old 'Jingo' song. The means of defence seem ample if capacity is forthcoming to organise and utilise them.

It is unnecessary to consider the details of the General Election, which are given and discussed *ad nauseam* in the daily press. No reasonable man can suppose that the overwhelming majority for the Government reflects a permanent preference for Conservatism or Unionism in the party sense at all proportional to the vote. It was expedient, and in our opinion right, not to delay the verdict of the constituencies, and to strengthen at the earliest possible moment the hands of the Government. There is little reason to suppose that a General Election in January of next year would have produced results at all different from this one in October. And it was clearly desirable, to say nothing of the general inconvenience of a January General Election, that the national will should not be left in doubt a moment longer than necessary. Nevertheless, the result of the elections has been largely caused by the passing circumstances of the time, and it would be jumping to a very rash conclusion indeed to suppose that it proves the steady growth in popular favour of the Conservative or Unionist party. The prosperous condition of trade was much on the side of the Government. The verdict was asked for and given almost on a single issue, and this will certainly not be the issue at another General Election; from which reflection Radicals and Home Rulers may perhaps draw some consolation in this day of their gloom.

Apart from the question of the moment, it is interesting to watch the political prescriptions offered from time to time by well-meaning advisers to cure the sickly condition of the Liberal party. Three years ago \* we called attention to the laudable anxiety of half-a-dozen 'Oxford men' to discover a principle of wide application, easily understood, to serve as a basis upon which party Liberalism might raise again a noble structure.† In 'Liberalism and the Empire,' published on the very eve of what is described as a coming 'khaki election,' we find the three essayists protesting, with no less fervour than that of the Oxonians of 1897, that the honour—nay, the safety—of the nation requires that its destinies should be in the keeping of the 'Liberal party.' They lose all sense of proportion in their conflict with the modern monster—Imperialism. Now it may be at once admitted that 'Imperialism' may be, and sometimes is, little better than vulgar swagger; that gentlemen whose

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\* Edinburgh Review, October 1897.

† Essays on Liberalism, by Six Oxford Men. London, 1897.

real interest in politics is financial may try to turn to their own advantage the genuine patriotism of an unsuspecting nation, and that the people do require to be warned of the danger of yielding to the reckless ambition of territorial expansion. It may well be that consolidation rather than expansion is the policy best calculated to increase the strength and welfare of the Empire. To paint the map red may tickle the popular fancy, but it is not necessarily an end at which a wise and patriotic policy must aim.

But the Liberalism of our three essayists is not content with this, for they are determined to prove that in every difficulty in recent years—with the Khalifa at Khartoum, the French at Fashoda, the Boers in the Transvaal—the nation, or rather those who have led it, have been not so much mistaken, as influenced by miserable motives and low ideals. The partisanship which, treating the events of a century ago, can write of Pitt as ‘the statesman who sold his soul and his country to the war party, Continental despotism, and the Court,’ may be expected, in the heat of living controversy, to be blind indeed to the actual circumstances and forces of its own day. If this is Liberalism, it is no less certainly partisanship of the narrowest kind. Advocacy such as this does a positive injury to what there is of good (and there is some good) in the cause the essayists espouse. It is not unworthy of notice that, if the position of our essayists could be established, the first result would be the expulsion of Imperialist Liberals—who after all count for something—from the ranks of the Liberal party!

We are told in the preface to these essays that

‘there is no sentiment so dangerous, there is no sentiment so easy to stimulate, as the false excess of patriotism. There is probably no country in the world from China to Peru in which the sub-conscious voices of national egotism do not persistently whisper in men’s ears the same intoxicating tale: “We are the pick and flower of nations, and (in one sense or another) the chosen people of God! Various foreigners may or may not have their good points, but only we are really whole and right and normal. Other nations boast and are aggressive; only we are modest, and content with our barest due, though it is obvious that we are by nature specially qualified for ruling others, and no unprejudiced person can doubt that our present territories ought to be increased. That our yoke is a pure blessing to all who come under it is a plain fact, proved by the almost unanimous testimony of our own citizens, our historians, our missionaries, our soldiers, our travellers, and only denied out of spite by a few envious foreigners whom no one believes.”’

A caricature, of course, even of the self-satisfied jingoism

of the platform and the press, which is far in excess of the sober patriotism of the majority of Englishmen. But can this excessive chauvinism or jingoism best be fought by embracing heart and soul on every occasion the cause of our national foes? Let it be granted that the official and unofficial representatives of the opinions of Englishmen, those who are authorised to speak for them and those who profess to do so, are sometimes too little mindful of the prejudices and even of the natural pride of other nations; still it is too much to tell us that in every quarrel Englishmen are always and wholly to blame! Liberal statesmanship would, it seems, have avoided all the wars of the last five years, and we should have remained in happy and peaceful relations with Afridis, Soudanese, and Boers—a view of things hardly warranted by experience, if we recall to memory the halcyon days of Gladstonian rule! Wars are hateful things in themselves. Yet Liberal, Tory, and Unionist statesmen have all found it, in their judgement, at times necessary to wage them. To contemplate the horrors *only* of any particular war is to incapacitate oneself from passing judgement as to its necessity, possibly even its righteousness. It is mere declamation, and offensive declamation too, to speak of ‘the almost motiveless expedition’ to the Soudan, with its barren and intoxicating splendour; ‘its necessary weakening of our military power by the ‘locking up of British and Egyptian soldiers to hold a ‘remote desert; its Oriental pageant of revenges, extended, it is to be feared, even to the wounded, and in one ‘case to the dead.’

More than half of this little volume is taken up by Mr. Hirst’s essay on ‘Imperialism and Finance,’ in which the easy, but certainly by no means useless, task is undertaken of pointing out the prodigious increase in recent years of the expenditure upon the army and navy. Lord Randolph Churchill, as we are reminded, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, made a stand in favour of economy, and actually retired from the Government because he could not persuade his colleagues to make great reductions in the military and naval expenditure. But, after all, experience is the great test of political wisdom, and, with the light of the last thirteen years, few Englishmen are inclined to reproach their rulers for having maintained a larger military or naval establishment than the necessities of the country required. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach does much more in the cause of economy by persevering in the somewhat thank-

less task of preventing waste than ever Lord Randolph did by resigning. Mr. Gladstone once declared that the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was an unpopular office because the Minister necessarily spent his time in saying to those who clamoured for expenditure, 'No! no! no!' According to Mr. Hirst, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach should be called 'the yes! yes! yes! Chancellor of the Exchequer,'\* a nickname we recommend to the consideration of 'the Departments' and Members of Parliament in general!

Mr. Hirst's essay is followed by others on the 'Exploitation of Inferior Races' and on 'Colonial and Foreign Policy.' It is to be regretted, we repeat, that a blind partisanship and very bad advocacy serve to conceal from the public what there is of good in the views the essayists would press upon it. Times will change, and even the cause of national economy and the reduction of expenditure will some day gain a hearing from the public. When that time comes, if our essayists can manage to urge their case without first insulting their audience, they may yet help forward the really good objects at which they are undoubtedly aiming.

To return to the General Election. The towns of Great Britain have declared almost wholly for the Government; and Great Britain, it must be remembered, is becoming yearly more urban. This is one of the most remarkable features of the General Election. No better reply could be given to the old taunt about the 'classes and the masses,' in which, indeed, from the first there was never anything more than a jingle! That Glasgow should give a solid vote for Lord Salisbury, that the Scotch burghs should return as many Unionists as Liberals to the House of Commons, that Scotland as a whole should show no majority for the 'Liberal Party,' must convince the most bigoted of old-fashioned Scottish Radicals that the policy of modern Unionist statesmen is something different from the 'Toryism' of their younger days, however fondly they as Radicals may cling to the old denunciatory word. From Ireland, as a matter of course, the Nationalist majority greatly predominates, and as usual no members at all are returned who profess any allegiance to the Liberal Party. In Ireland alone has a member of the Government been defeated at the polls, in the person, moreover, of the politician who has worked harder than any one else to soften the party animosity which is the bane of that country, and to bring together

men of varying opinions and political connexion to work for the common good. Mr. Plunkett's defeat displays in an unhappy light the difficulties which beset the efforts of a Government influenced by the sole desire of maintaining an impartial rule amidst the jars of faction; and we are afraid that some time must elapse before in that country at all adequate justice is done to the little-requited labours in her behalf of Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. Plunkett. What effect among Nationalist rivalries the loss by Mr. Healy's followers of several seats may produce, remains to be seen. For the time being the alliance between Nationalists and Liberals is entirely at an end, and the loss or gain of members to one or the other group of Irish Nationalists in the House of Commons will produce no effect upon the general political situation.

A united party consisting of some 400 Unionists supporting the Government will face on the Opposition benches 190 British Liberals and Radicals, and 80 Irish Nationalists. That is the new House of Commons! The British Liberals in the late Parliament were, as to their political sympathies, sometimes even in their votes, sharply divided among themselves, and it is quite certain that they are not coming back to the new Parliament on any better terms with each other. The Welsh members form a conspicuous element of modern Liberalism, but it is hardly one to which Liberal-Imperialist reconstructors can look for assistance. Yet, if the Liberal party is to be reconstructed at all in the present state of public feeling, it must be by men such as Lord Rosebery, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Asquith, and Sir Edward Grey. For the time being, rightly or wrongly, the country can hardly be brought to contemplate seriously a party dominated by the views of anti-Imperialists. Yet this has to be remembered—a strong party in opposition cannot be formed on the principle of agreement with the Government of the day in its main policy. Many amateur advisers of Liberal statesmen, while constantly expressing their desire to see a strong Opposition asserting itself in the House of Commons, appear to think that its chief function will be to lend a helping hand to forward the policy of Her Majesty's Ministers. Now no Opposition ever was, or ever will be, built up out of anything but opposition to the Government of the day. Well, then, to what conclusion are we compelled? To this—that at the present time the conditions do not exist which make possible the reconstruction of a strong Liberal party, or a strong party of any sort in opposition,

and that nothing is to be gained by pretending to unanimity of opinion which has no existence in fact.

It does not, however, follow from this that the present Government will last for ever. Times change, sometimes very rapidly. A general election and a huge majority have given to Lord Salisbury's Administration fresh life and strength, but they do not smooth away all the difficulties that stand between the Government and success. The British people are apt to think that when they have shown their confidence in a Government that Government can do what it likes and get what it wants, and are not always as satisfied as they should be when the Government merely does or gets the best which circumstances admit. Lord Salisbury, eminently successful as he has been as Foreign Minister, has already had some little experience of the exacting expectations of the public. An Opposition cannot be constructed artificially and to order, but one is certain to arise when conditions admit of it, when, as is inevitable, mistakes are made and failure comes, and when, as is also inevitable, the people begin to want a change of men. It is the Irish Alliance and the Home Rule policy that still weigh down the present and obscure the future of British party Liberalism. When these are frankly repudiated an Opposition will perhaps again arise capable of taking advantage of a turn of the tide.





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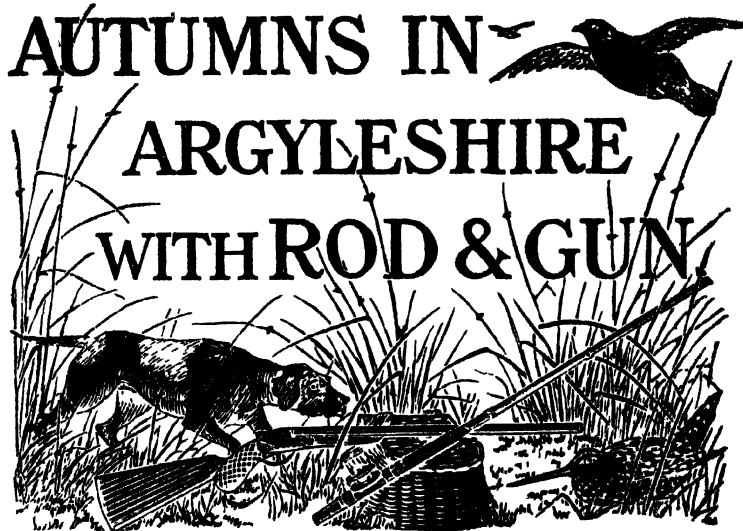
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